

JAMES'S DIVINE CHRISTOLOGY

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BY
DAVID MICHAEL WYMAN

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations not listed follow *The SBL Handbook of Style* (eds. Patrick H. Alexander, et al.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999).

BAGL	<i>Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics</i>
NETS	<i>A New English Translation of the Septuagint and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included Under that Title</i> . Eds. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. Oxford: OUP, 2007.
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTR	New Testament Readings
NTT	New Testament Theology
OG	Old Greek
OUP	Oxford University Press
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
THOTC	Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary

ABSTRACT

This work examines Christology in the letter of James. It specifically deals with whether James has a divine Christology or not. The primary evidence for this study is the letter of James. Also examined is early Jewish literature and Jewish Scriptures that have historical or literary relevance to James. Secondary literature that relates to the topic is also considered.

The thesis begins with a survey of recent scholarship on James's Christology to situate the current debate on whether or not he has a divine Christology. It then proceeds to survey recent scholarship on the issue of ancient Jewish monotheism to provide categories for understanding whether or not James relates to "Lord Jesus Christ" (Jas. 1:1; 2:1) in ways analogous to how Jewish people related to their covenant God. Then the thesis briefly surveys how James talks about "God" in his letter. After that, it proceeds to enter into James's Christology by examining a critical text: James 5:1-11. It then analyzes James's Christology as a whole in relational categories.

The thesis of this paper is that the content and shape of James's Christology, construed as a relation between the believer and the risen Lord, is analogous only to how Jewish monotheists related to their covenant deity, YHWH. As such, James's Christology is divine.

VITA

The author of this work is David Michael Wyman. Born February 15, 1991, in Newton, Massachusetts, he has lived in Walpole, Massachusetts most of his life. He received his formal education through the Walpole Public School System. Upon completion of required studies at Walpole High School, he entered Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. From there, he received the bachelor of arts degree with a major in history and minor in philosophy, graduating with Commonwealth and Departmental honors. Immediately after graduation, he entered Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. His studies, MA (New Testament) and MA (Biblical Languages) will be completed in August, 2016.

Mr. Wyman currently lives in Walpole, Massachusetts with his wife Emma, his parents Brent and Anne Marie, and his brother Joe.

Introduction

James, according to common assessment, says little about the figure he calls “Lord Jesus Christ” (Jas. 1:1; 2:1). Scholars are split over the extent and nature of his Christology, and whether or not we can even know anything about it. Some, such as Andrew Chester and Dale Allison, opt for an agnostic approach (see Chapter 1). They argue that the little evidence of Christology in James does not give us a large enough body of material to posit any sort of Christology, let alone a divine one. But others put much weight on the few christological statements within the letter. They argue, in different ways, that James does have a divine Christology. Scholars with the divine Christology view include J. Ramsey Michaels, William Baker, Robert Sloan, Larry Hurtado, and Richard Bauckham (see Chapter 1). They contend that despite the lack of explicit christological material, what James does say about Christ is significant. The arguments employed in favor of a divine Christology usually involve exegetically examining various passages in James and comparing what he says about Jesus to what Jewish people said about their God. Therefore, within scholarship on the Christology of James, there is some strong disagreement about whether James has a divine Christology. This thesis seeks to enter the debate and examine the question: does James have a divine Christology?¹

The present study argues in the tradition of those who argue for a divine Christology, but it approaches the question in a slightly different manner. To decide whether James has a divine Christology, it is first necessary to account for how early

¹ The meaning of the term “divine Christology” will become apparent as the thesis progresses, but for shorthand one can define it as a Christology that sees Jesus as one whose status is at the level of the unique God of Israel, which is expressed through a unique relational pattern. In this regard, the thesis follows Tilling’s approach to Jewish monotheism and Christology. See especially, Chris Tilling, *Paul’s Divine Christology* (WUNT II/323. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012). Henceforth *PDC*. See Chapter 2 for further discussion.

Jews expressed the uniqueness of their God, YHWH. Up to this point, the advocates for divine Christology in James have only interacted minimally with establishing any sort of expectations for what a divine Christology would entail for a Jewish person such as James.² Some scholars (e.g. Paul Hayman, Paula Fredriksen) even question the notion that “Jewish monotheism” appropriately describes what early Jewish people believed. If they are right, a divine Christology might entail fitting Jesus into a sort of sliding scale of deity. In contrast, a number of scholars accept *monotheism* as a category for understanding how Jews in the Second Temple period expressed the uniqueness of their God (e.g. Hurtado, Bauckham, James McGrath, Chris Tilling). But even they disagree about how Jews expressed their monotheism. The second chapter of this thesis surveys their various proposals and accepts as a working assumption Tilling’s account of Jewish faith in God as expressed through a unique relational pattern between the individual and God. As a result, the “qualifications” for considering Jesus divine in James are ratcheted up such that for James to have a divine Christology he must evidence a relational pattern between himself (and his community) and the Lord Jesus that is analogous to how Jews expressed the uniqueness of their God.

From here the next logical step is to establish briefly the relational pattern James uses to talk about God. In so doing, one establishes the general categories that James himself uses in relation to the one he calls “God.” The “God-relation” pattern of data that results does two things: (1) it confirms that James expresses monotheism through a unique relation to his God, (2) it provides a rough set of categories that James himself uses to express that unique relation. So the next piece of the argument turns to a

² It is notable, though, that Hurtado and Bauckham have done much work on the nature of monotheism among early Jews. But they interact with James’s Christology only minimally, preferring to focus their attention mainly on Paul’s Christology. See below.

specific text in James, James 5:1-11, in order to establish that James talks about the Lord Jesus in the same way Jews talked about YHWH, their covenant God. It is at this impetus that the thesis then analyzes the whole letter of James in terms of a relational pattern to see if James relates to Jesus in the ways Jews expressed their unique relation to their God. What emerges is a pattern that looks remarkably like how James relates to the figure he designates as “God,” and how Jews related to and talked about YHWH. In short, this thesis contends that the content and shape of the letter of James’s Christology, construed as a relation between believers and the risen Lord, is analogous only to how Jewish monotheists related to their covenant deity, YHWH. As such, James’s Christology is truly divine.

CHAPTER 1

Survey of Recent Scholarship on James's Christology

The issue of whether James has a divine Christology does not feature much in literature about early Christian Christology.¹ Discussion about James's Christology itself has generated wide disparity from those who argue he has no Christology to those who argue he has a divine Christology. Andrew Chester, in his analysis of James's Christology, states that "James says notoriously little about Christ," and even to attempt "to find anything much in the way of developed or explicit Christology is little more than special pleading."² Further, he asserts that there is no support for an "elevated Christology" that comes "close to making Christ identical with God" anywhere in James.³ Similarly, Dale Allison remarks that James is a theocentric document within which Jesus's name only occurs once (Jas. 1:1), "so attempts to reconstruct James' Christology have little with which to work."⁴ He critiques Christian readers and modern scholars for inserting Christology into James where none exists. They have "incessantly read christological

¹ In Larry Hurtado's work on Christian origins, James features in a tertiary manner. See below. In Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the God of Israel*, James, aside from a passing footnote in a citation list (Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 95n89)), only appears in a catalogue of Christian applications of YHWH texts to Jesus in relation to Paul's Christology (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 220-221). James McGrath does not mention James in his study subtitled, *Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context* (James F. McGrath, *The Only True God: Early Christian Monotheism in Its Jewish Context* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009)). Crispin Fletcher-Louis only mentions James once, and it is in reference to Hurtado's work (*Christological Origins: The Emerging Consensus and Beyond* (Vol. 1 in *Jesus Monotheism*; Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 17). This is not to fault these scholars, since many reasons might exist not to include James; rather, it is simply to point out the relative absence James has in works on early Christian Christology.

² Andrew Chester, "The Theology of James," in Andrew Chester and Ralph P. Martin, *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 43.

³ Chester, "Theology of James," 44. Chester makes this statement during his rejection of the view that would result in James identifying Jesus as the Shekinah in James 2:1. That is, since James nowhere else depicts Jesus in such exalted terms, it is unlikely that Jas. 2:1 does either.

⁴ Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 89. Allison argues for a conjectural emendation in James 2:1 that reads τοῦ κυρίου τῆς δόξης rather than including ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. So "Jesus" only occurs once in the letter (Jas. 1:1). See, Allison, *Epistle of James*, 382-384.

elements into almost every single verse,” simply because it is part of the New Testament.⁵ In reality, James is almost entirely absent of Christology (except 1:1).⁶ One cannot assume christologically-deficient James had the same Christology as Paul or other early Christian literature from the NT.⁷ In short, “we simply do not know where to put our author on the christological map.”⁸ So studying any Christology present in James might be doomed from the start, since evidence is evidently too sparse.

On the contrary, though, a number of scholars argue that James has a divine Christology. J. Ramsey Michaels challenges the notion that James has a nearly non-existent Christology. He contends that for James, “the Lord” is Jesus.⁹ By referring to Jesus as κύριος in James 1:1, James identifies him as none other than the one God of Israel, the covenant Lord of the OT.¹⁰ So, in 1:1, when James uses the correlative term δοῦλος to identify himself as the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, he identifies himself as a Christian, an authority figure, and one who worships Jesus along with his audience.¹¹ Likewise, 1:1 initiates James’s letter-wide ambiguity and willingness to speak about God and Jesus interchangeably.¹² Michaels points out the interpretive challenges in James concerning the antecedent to pronouns and to whom the title “Lord” refers (e.g. Jas. 1:7, 12).¹³ The result is that James makes no real distinction between God and the Lord Jesus,

⁵ Allison, *Epistle of James*, 90.

⁶ Allison, *Epistle of James*, 90.

⁷ Allison, *Epistle of James*, 90.

⁸ Allison, *Epistle of James*, 90.

⁹ J. Ramsey Michaels, “Catholic Christologies in the Catholic Epistles,” in *Contours of Christology in the New Testament* (ed. Richard N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 270.

¹⁰ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 270.

¹¹ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 271.

¹² Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 271.

¹³ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 271.

so that “both are ‘Lord’ – and the reader cannot help but wonder if perhaps both are ‘God.’”¹⁴ James continues his linguistic ambiguity throughout the letter.

In James 2, 4, and 5, it is difficult for the modern interpreter to determine whether the referent is God or the Lord Jesus. James contrasts favoritism with fulfilling “the royal law” (2:8; cf. 1:25), but leaves ambiguous who the lawgiver is.¹⁵ The instances of the various terms and phrases such as *νομοθέτης* and *κριτής* (4:12), *κριτής* (5:9), *παρουσία κυρίου* (5:7, 8), and *κύριος* (5:10, 11, 15; cf. 1:7) are probably the Lord Jesus due to the focus on the Parousia.¹⁶ But for Michaels it is not about assigning reference to God or Jesus; rather, since James considers “‘the Lord’ of the Hebrew Bible and ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’” as “one and the same,” “he has no interest in distinguishing between them as ‘Father’ and ‘Son,’ only in recognizing and honoring one ‘Lord’ and ‘God.’”¹⁷ Others follow Michaels’s contention that James identifies Jesus as Israel’s God.

William Baker does not take Chester’s and Allison’s negative views either. Although he has some disagreements with Michaels, he also sees James as having a divine Christology. He argues that James presents Jesus in three major ways: (1) “the church’s teacher,” (2) “he shares the quality and offices of God,” (3) “he remains functionally active in the church.”¹⁸ He states that eight out of the twelve unmodified uses of “Lord” in James “most certainly refer to God” (1:7; 2:9; 4:10; 4:15; 5:4; 5:10; 5:11x2).¹⁹ Contra Hurtado (see below), he asserts that 4:15 (“If the Lord wills”)

¹⁴ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 272.

¹⁵ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 272.

¹⁶ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 272-273.

¹⁷ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 273.

¹⁸ William R. Baker, “Christology in the Epistle of James,” EQ 74:1 (2002), 51.

¹⁹ Baker, “Christology,” 53.

“certainly” refers to “God’s providential hand over events” rather than Jesus’s.²⁰

Regarding 5:10 (prophets speaking “in the name of the Lord”) and 5:11 (“the Lord is very compassionate and merciful”), he states that “surely it is God.”²¹ Other than simply asserting these interpretations to be self-evident with “certainly” and “surely,” he grounds his assertions on the fact that there is no support from interpreters for considering these texts as references to Jesus rather than God.²² So he argues for six total references to Jesus (1:1; 2:1; 5:7, 8, 14, 15).²³ Baker states that by using the title, “Lord,” “James implies Jesus’ share in the honor and respect which in Judaism was reserved for God alone.”²⁴ The second significant title Jesus has in James is “the name” (2:8; 5:14), which is how Jews spoke of God/YHWH.²⁵ So, “that the name of Christ can be blasphemed just as the name of Yahweh further underscores that Christ is to share honor that was previously withheld by Jews for God alone.”²⁶ The third title James uses of Jesus is “Judge” (5:9), which on the mouth of a clear monotheist (e.g. 2:19) who believed that there is only one judge (4:11-12), is nothing short of depicting Jesus in analogous terms as God.²⁷ Baker also slightly favors the notion that the phrase *τῆς δόξης* in 2:1 refers to Jesus as the Shekinah glory, which implies that Jesus shares characteristics with God.²⁸ Given these things, he concludes that Jesus in James “deserves all the honor and respect

²⁰ Baker, “Christology,” 53.

²¹ Baker, “Christology,” 53.

²² Baker, “Christology,” 53.

²³ Baker, “Christology,” 53.

²⁴ Baker, “Christology,” 54.

²⁵ Baker, “Christology,” 54.

²⁶ Baker, “Christology,” 54.

²⁷ Baker, “Christology,” 54.

²⁸ Baker, “Christology,” 55.

we offer God.”²⁹ Baker also notes that James presents Jesus as present and active in the community of faith, and as one to whom believers may call upon in times of need.³⁰ For Baker, then, James has a fully divine Christology because he treats Jesus with the honor only befitting Israel’s God.

Another scholar that argues for a divine Christology in James is Robert Sloan. He argues that James has an implicit Christology as well as an explicit one.³¹ He first outlines how James reflects theological motifs that were present in the emergent decades of Christianity. For example, James has common OT exegetical quotes and allusions (e.g., combining Lev. 19:18 and Deut. 6:4-5), common thought and language (e.g. Romans 5:2b-5 and 1 Peter 1:16-7; cf. Jas. 1:2-4), common eschatology (e.g. *παρουσία κυρίου* in Jas. 5:7, 8; cf. Mark 13:33-37; 1 Thess. 4:18), and common use of dominical sayings (e.g. Jas. 2:5; cf. Matt. 5:3).³² What this shows is that, “the theology of James is not alien to the theological currents of primitive Christianity as reflected in the canonical literature.”³³ Regarding James’s Christology, it “lies for the most part beneath the surface of the practical exhortations in the book.”³⁴ James imitates Jesus’s rabbinic-prophetic tone that combines kinship and friendship language with harsh rebuke.³⁵ Furthermore, the risen Lord, who is the risen historical Jesus, is still present and active in the community worship of the church by healing and forgiving (5:14, 15; cf. Mark 2:1-12).³⁶ As for James’s explicit Christology, Sloan sees the ascription “Messiah” (*χριστός*) in James 1:1

²⁹ Baker, “Christology,” 55.

³⁰ Baker, “Christology,” 55.

³¹ Robert B. Sloan, “The Christology of James,” CTR 1.1 (1986) 3-29.

³² Sloan, “Christology,” 2-14.

³³ Sloan, “Christology,” 14.

³⁴ Sloan, “Christology,” 14.

³⁵ Sloan, “Christology,” 15-16.

³⁶ Sloan, “Christology,” 16.

and 2:1 as more name than title, but it still maintains some of its Jewish royal messianiac roots and its connection to the public ministry of Jesus.³⁷ Moreover, the title “Lord” in 1:1 and 2:1 conforms to the earliest Christian usage that refers “to the kingly status of the resurrected Jesus” at God’s right hand as ruler and intercessor.³⁸ Sloan takes τῆς δόξης in 2:1 as a substantive (“the Glory”), which indicates that James uses the euphemism for YHWH by applying it to the risen Lord Jesus.³⁹ This does not automatically imply a “divine Christology,” but it at least shows Jesus has an exalted status at God’s right hand.⁴⁰ The term “the name” (Jas. 2:7; 5:14) is also christologically important. In an analogous way to YHWH calling for himself a people to be his (Deut. 28:10), “so also early Christians understood their own self identity in terms of the ‘Lord Jesus’ by whom and through whom they had been called and to whom they were to give their allegiance.”⁴¹ Finally are the references to “Judge” and “Lawgiver” (Jas. 4:12; 5:9), both of which Sloan argues are likely references to Jesus rather than God.⁴² The “law” in James refers to the Torah of Jesus, i.e. “the law of Israel as given and (re-) interpreted by Jesus the great Lawgiver.”⁴³ So for Sloan, James speaks about Jesus in ways that the OT and Jews spoke about their God.

In his broader christological works Larry Hurtado largely focuses on Paul, the Synoptics, and Johannine texts. His focus on these texts is understandable since Paul provides the most extensive body of early Christian material with which to work and was

³⁷ Sloan, “Christology,” 19-20.

³⁸ Sloan, “Christology,” 20.

³⁹ Sloan, “Christology,” 21.

⁴⁰ Sloan, “Christology,” 21.

⁴¹ Sloan, “Christology,” 22.

⁴² Sloan, “Christology,” 22-26.

⁴³ Sloan, “Christology,” 24.

influential in the early centuries of Christianity. Plus, the Synoptics and Johannine texts also had a high degree of impact. So it is not surprising that in one of his major works on Christology, *Lord Jesus Christ*, he treats James only sparsely and secondarily.⁴⁴ He includes James 5:14 in a list of references to healing using the name of Jesus in early Christian texts, which is part of a larger pattern of devotional practices in connection with Jesus's name.⁴⁵ In the second relevant text, he explicitly mentions James 2:7 "as another allusion to the ritual use of Jesus' name in baptism."⁴⁶ In another work, *At the Origins of Christian Worship (OCW)*, Hurtado refers to James in a substantive way just once.⁴⁷ To help demonstrate the potency in early Christian corporate worship settings, he notes that James indicates that "miraculous healing," as a manifestation of the divine power present in the ἐκκλεσία, was seen as readily available for Christians to seek.⁴⁸ But there is not specifically christological reference to James in *OCW*. In line with the trend, in *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God*, he does not mention James at all.⁴⁹ This is not to fault Hurtado, but merely highlight the relative absence of James in his general work on early Christian beliefs about and devotional practices toward Jesus. What is notable is that he has written specifically on the Christology of James.

⁴⁴ This is not to say he regards James as unimportant; rather, it provides more of a confirming and supporting role regarding devotion to Jesus. Hurtado largely ignores James to focus on the more influential early Pauline, Synoptic, and Johannine literature. Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 496-497. Henceforth *LJC*. After briefly examining Hebrews and the later Pauline texts of Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Letters, he notes that extending his treatment to 1-2 Peter, Jude, and Revelation would prove gratuitous, since they confirm the dominant traditions that treat Jesus as divine. Hurtado, *LJC*, 518. It is possible that Hurtado regards this as true for James also, but he does not say.

⁴⁵ Hurtado, *LJC*, 200n89.

⁴⁶ Hurtado, *LJC*, 202.

⁴⁷ There is a second reference, but it is simply in parentheses to support the fact that early Christians sung hymns in their regular devotional life. Larry W. Hurtado, *At the Origins of Christian Worship: The Context and Character of Earliest Christian Devotion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 86. Henceforth, *OCW*.

⁴⁸ Hurtado, *OCW*, 59, 59n38.

⁴⁹ Larry W. Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005). Henceforth, *HEDJBG*.

Hurtado, like most others, states that James's Christology is implicit.⁵⁰ The Christology within James is traditional and uncontroversial.⁵¹ The titles χριστός and κύριος are part of "formulaic expressions" in James 1:1 and 2:1.⁵² Regarding τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης, the τῆς δόξης is an attributive adjective ("the glorious Lord Jesus Christ"), which Hurtado describes as a "particularly sonorous and honorific expression."⁵³ Out of the occurrences of the word κύριος, a number of them likely refer to Jesus in his view. James probably refers to Jesus as κύριος in 4:15 and 5:7-11.⁵⁴ The references in 5:7-11 are especially significant because Jesus is associated with roles that God had in the OT.⁵⁵ Also, κύριος in James 5:13-15 probably refers to the Lord Jesus who raises the sick and forgives their sins and in whose name Christians anoint the sick.⁵⁶ James 2:7 emphasizes the sacred significance of Jesus's name similar to Acts 1-11.⁵⁷ Finally, James accepts Jesus as the "Lord of Christian behavior."⁵⁸ Hurtado's account of James's Christology hints at the fact, at least at points, that James uses categories that Israelites/Jews used to describe their covenant deity to describe the risen Lord Jesus, whether through sovereignty over historical contingencies (4:15), future coming in judgment (5:7-11), healing and forgiveness in the community of faith (5:13-15), or the sacredness of his name (2:7). There is a relational analogy between OT Israel and their covenant deity, and Christians and the risen Lord.

⁵⁰ Larry W. Hurtado, "Christology," in *The Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Development* (eds. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids; Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997), 173.

⁵¹ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵² Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵³ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵⁴ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵⁵ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵⁶ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵⁷ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵⁸ Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

Richard Bauckham has, like Hurtado, has dealt specifically with James's Christology despite it having secondary status in his wider treatment of early Christian Christology. Bauckham notes, contra Chester and Allison, that James's Christology is "more prominent and considerably higher than is often allowed."⁵⁹ So Jesus is κύριος in 5:7, 8, 14, 15 and κριτής in 5:9, which comparison to early Christian literature makes clear (κύριος in 5:7:8; cf. Matt. 24:3; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 3:13, etc; κύριος in 5:14, 15; cf. Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10, 12; 9:34; κριτής in 5:9; cf. Mark 13:29; Rev. 3:20).⁶⁰ James 5:7-11 indicates that Jesus shares the divine throne in heaven and is coming to execute God's eschatological judgment in an allusion to Hosea 6:3, in which James interprets "YHWH will come" as referring to the Lord Jesus's παρουσία.⁶¹ James, like Paul, has "a Christology of divine identity."⁶² As for the construction τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης in 2:1, Bauckham contends that it is a combination of "Jesus Christ" and "the Lord of glory" (Cf. 1 Cor. 2:8) from a Christological exegesis of Ps. 24:6.⁶³ Additionally, James presents the risen Jesus of Nazareth as the one whom he serves (alongside God) (Jas. 1:1), in whom Christians believe (Jas. 2:1), who is present and active in the community continuing his earthly healing ministry as the risen Lord (Jas. 5:14-15; cf. Acts 3-4).⁶⁴ Bauckham also makes an important note that comparing James's letter with Paul's letters as a whole is not a proper comparison; rather, since James as a whole is paraenesis literature, the proper comparison is between James and paraenesis passages in

⁵⁹ Richard Bauckham, *James: Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage* (NTR; London: Routledge, 1999), 138.

⁶⁰ Bauckham, *James*, 138.

⁶¹ Bauckham, *James*, 138.

⁶² Bauckham, *James*, 139.

⁶³ Bauckham, *James*, 139.

⁶⁴ Bauckham, *James*, 139.

Paul (e.g. Rom. 12-13).⁶⁵ Upon comparison, James and Paul have a similar amount of christological references per verse.⁶⁶

Thus it is evident that there is significant disagreement with Chester's declaration that James nowhere has an elevated Christology, let alone divine one, and Allison's christological agnosticism. It is precisely the opposite, argue Michaels, Baker, Sloan, Hurtado, and Bauckham. Their arguments, though having some differences and disagreements on some specifics, all argue that James identifies the risen Lord and Messiah Jesus as YHWH, Israel's covenant deity, or at least relates to him in analogous terms. The cumulative effect of their arguments is strong and one would need to usher in ample counter-argumentation to establish that James does not have a divine Christology. But if some of their arguments are solid exegetical pearls, they still lack a string to attach them. They hint at the solution by moving toward describing James's Christology in relational categories analogous to the way Second Temple Jews related to and spoke about YHWH. This thesis will argue that *relationship* is the category that brings these various christological pearls together coherently in a Christology that James himself would recognize as his own. The impetus for this line of argumentation comes from Tilling's study on Paul's divine Christology.⁶⁷ Tilling identifies nine relational categories that shape Paul's divine Christology:

- (1) Paul's Christ-shaped goal and motivations
- (2) Various expressions of Christ-devotion
- (3) The passionate nature of Christ-devotion
- (4) What Paul contrasts with Christ-devotion
- (5) The presence and activity of the risen Lord
- (6) The absence of the risen Lord (e.g. *παρουσία* of Christ)

⁶⁵ Bauckham, *James*, 139-140.

⁶⁶ Bauckham, *James*, 140.

⁶⁷ Tilling, *PDC*.

- (7) An absent Lord whose presence is mediated by the Spirit
- (8) Communications between the risen Lord and believers
- (9) The nature and character of Christ's risen lordship⁶⁸

So it is the contention here that as Second Temple Jewish monotheists related to their God in a life of all-consuming love for him, in this way James relates to the risen Lord Jesus. There are some caveats to make, though. First, James is a relatively brief letter compared to the Paul's giants like Romans and the Corinthian correspondences. It is roughly the size of Colossians. Second, its genre is of eschatological paraenesis.⁶⁹ As noted above, early Christian paraenesis literature is not as christologically dense as other places. These two factors of scarcity mean that we cannot expect James to give what perhaps some would prefer – a mass of evidence. Compared to Paul, James's Christology in his letter is only a small portion of an assumed larger, though largely inaccessible whole. Nevertheless, what James does provide is sufficient to establish his divine Christology, even if it is but a snapshot. But first it is necessary to understand how early Jews related to their covenant deity.

⁶⁸ Tilling, *PDC*, 105-180.

⁶⁹ Todd C. Penner, *The Epistle of James and Eschatology: Re-reading an Ancient Christian Letter* (JSNTSS 121; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 212. Cf. Bauckham, *James*, 139-140. The genre of eschatological paraenesis does not exclude other influences, e.g. prophetic style.

CHAPTER 2

Survey of Recent Scholarship on Jewish Monotheism

There has been a spate of literature in the past thirty years concerning the phenomenon of ancient Jewish monotheism. Some have argued that to speak of ancient Jewish monotheism is simply inaccurate. For example, Peter Hayman states that prior to the Middle Ages, “it is hardly ever appropriate to use the term monotheism to describe the Jewish idea of God.”¹ He prefers the phrase “cooperative dualism” rather than monotheism due to what he sees as a “dualistic pattern” that includes two divine figures:

(1) “the supreme creator God,” (2) his vice-regent/vizier who is the one who really manages the created order.² Another scholar who thinks monotheism is not an accurate way to describe ancient Jewish belief and practice in relation to their deity is Paula Fredriksen. She prefers to dispense with the term *monotheism* altogether. Since in antiquity, “all gods exist,” ancient monotheism actually means that there is one god on top with the other deities subordinate in various degrees to the high god.³ For Jewish people like Paul, the existence of the various deities was an experiential reality rather

¹ Peter Hayman, “Monotheism – A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 42.1 (1991): 2.

² Hayman, “Monotheism,” 11, 2. One major problem with Hayman’s view is that he never defines “monotheism” or “divine entity.” He even explicitly intends not to define monotheism. So, he states, “I do not intend to proceed here by setting up a model definition of monotheism and then assessing the Jewish tradition against this yardstick.” Hayman, “Monotheism,” 2. So when he denies the existence of monotheism, he has necessarily smuggled in a certain definition. Similarly ill-defined is the term “divine.” So he states, “hardly any variety of Judaism seems to have been able to manage with just one divine entity.” Hayman, “Monotheism,” 11. If one defines “divine” in a broad way (e.g. “all heavenly entities”), and monotheism as necessarily only having one figure in that category, then obviously monotheism did not exist (except until the modern period). What he specifically intends not to do (i.e. define monotheism), is what he needs to do. See also, Larry W. Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” *JSNT* 71 (1998): 6n6.

³ Paula Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the study of Christian origins whose time has come to go,” *Studies in Religion* 35/2 (2006): 241. See also, Paula Fredriksen, “Jesus the Jewish Christ,” *Studia Theologica* 66 (2012), 12.

than bare intellectual assent to their existence.⁴ So while he experientially knows that these other deities exist, the difference is that he does not worship them; instead, he exclusively worships Israel's God.⁵ Thus the term *monotheism* ill describes the ancient Jewish experience, because "ancient monotheists were polytheists."⁶

Opposite Hayman and Fredriksen are scholars who contend that the phrase "Jewish monotheism" is an accurate description of the ways most Jewish people related to their deity. The issue is, at least in part, one of definition. Hayman and Fredriksen seem to work with a modern definition of monotheism that amounts to intellectual assent to the existence/reality of only one deity (or heavenly non-human figure). On this account, they conclude that to use the category *monotheism* to analyze ancient Jewish belief and practice is incorrect. Fredriksen's note that Paul knew that other deities existed but he only worshipped Israel's God is not necessarily inconsistent with those who argue for the appropriateness of the term *monotheism*. The scholars who argue for the legitimacy of the term *monotheism* take a methodologically inductive approach to judge not only whether ancient Jewish people were monotheists, but to define ancient monotheism itself.⁷ They argue that historians should "take people as monotheistic if that

⁴ Fredriksen, "Mandatory Retirement," 241. As evidence she cites 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 4:8-9; 1 Cor. 8:5-6; 15:24-27; Phil 2:10; 1 Thess. 1:9-10.

⁵ Fredriksen, "Mandatory Retirement," 242.

⁶ Fredriksen, "Mandatory Retirement," 242. She makes similar points in her article, "Gods and the One God: In antiquity, all monotheists were polytheists," *Bible Review* (Feb. 2003): 12, 49. For example, she states, "no ancient monotheist was a modern monotheist. Divinity expressed itself along a gradient, and the High God – be he pagan, Jewish or Christian – hardly stood alone. Lesser divinities filled in the gap, cosmic and metaphysical, between humans and God." Fredriksen, "Gods and the One God," 49. She defines monotheism in modern terms, i.e. belief in the existence of one deity or supernatural exalted being. The issue again is the need for a more inductive definition of monotheism. Her call to expunge the term *monotheism* from the study of Christian Origins is based on a number of misunderstandings. See, Tilling, *PDC*, 64n4.

⁷ So see, Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 5-8. See also this article reprinted with slight editorial revisions as "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," in *HEDJBG*, 113-115.

is what they profess to be,” rather than imposing a pre-conceived notion of monotheism deductively onto the evidence.⁸

Larry Hurtado, Richard Bauckham, James McGrath, and Chris Tilling articulate four similar yet distinct views on the concept of ancient Jewish monotheism. They all affirm the appropriateness of the term *monotheism*. Hurtado argues that ancient Jews expressed the uniqueness of their God primarily through cultic/liturgical behavior.⁹ The difference between God and the various intermediary or principal agent figures is that there was “reluctance to offer public, corporate worship to” the latter.¹⁰ Thus, “it is precisely with reference to worship that ancient Jewish religious tradition most clearly distinguished the unique one God from those other heavenly beings,” primarily through cultic and liturgical behavior (e.g. sacrifice).¹¹ Hurtado first surveys Jewish language about God, which he characterizes as a “strongly monotheistic profession.”¹² The expressions of this monotheism focus on two main themes: (1) God’s sovereignty, and (2) God’s uniqueness.¹³ For ancient Jews in the first century, God’s sovereignty is universal, and God is absolutely unique in the cosmos.¹⁴ To express God’s uniqueness, Jews commonly contrasted him with other deities in the manner of Isaiah 40-55 (e.g.

⁸ Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 6.

⁹ Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 3-4. Methodologically, Hurtado argues that “religious practices, especially cultic and liturgical practices and related behaviour” are significant for understanding religious groups. Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 8. This serves as a corrective to overemphasizing religious concepts and doctrines.

¹⁰ Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 4.

¹¹ Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 9. This is not entirely different from what Fredriksen says regarding Paul, i.e. that he knows other deities exist, but he only worships the God of Israel. Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement,” 242. No doubt strong disagreements are still present, but Fredriksen perhaps inadvertently touches on, or trivializes, what Hurtado explicates more fully and as more important: worship is exclusively directed toward Israel’s God.

¹² Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 9.

¹³ Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 9-14.

¹⁴ Hurtado, “First-Century Jewish Monotheism,” 13.

Wis. 13-15; Philo, *Dec. 65*).¹⁵ With regard to positive heavenly beings (e.g. principal agents, angels), Jews maintained God's uniqueness and superiority over them as their master.¹⁶ This profession of God's uniqueness carried over into Jewish devotional patterns, especially cultic behavior (e.g. ritual sacrificial, corporate prayer).¹⁷ It is this devotional pattern that constitutes worship practices.¹⁸ Exclusive sacrifice offered to Israel's God in the Jerusalem Temple was the primary institution of cultic worship, which reflects a "strongly monotheistic orientation" that was not given to any human ancestors or angelic figures.¹⁹ The evidence also, in the large majority of cases, shows that Jews exclusively worshipped and prayed to God alone and avoided prayer to other figures.²⁰ Thus, it is worship that is the "decisive criterion" "by which Jews maintained the uniqueness of God over against both idols and God's own deputies," an obligation that, if violated, constituted idolatry.²¹

¹⁵ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 13. So the Philo text states, "Let us, then, engrave deep in our hearts this as the first and most sacred of commandments; to acknowledge and honour one God who is above all, and let the idea that gods are many never even reach the ears of the man whose rule of life is to seek the truth in purity and guilelessness (*Dec. 65*)."
Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 13.

¹⁶ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 13-14.

¹⁷ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 14-22. Hurtado defines *devotional pattern* as, "the sum of the overtly religious practices and actions;" and, *cultic behavior* of a person or group as, "prescribed and characteristic actions set within the sacred place or liturgical occasion, explicitly functioning as components of a person's or group's religious identity, and intended to effect, represent, maintain and enhance the relationship between the devotee(s) and the deity/deities affirmed by the person or group" (e.g. ritual sacrifice, formal/corporate/liturgical prayer). Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 14.

¹⁸ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 14. Hurtado qualifies this by stating that not every act of veneration constitutes worship in this sense. Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 14-15.

¹⁹ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 15. At Qumran and in the synagogues there was also a strong monotheistic focus through cultic or religious devotion. Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 15.

²⁰ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 16-20.

²¹ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 22, 23. Importantly, Hurtado notes that this exclusive devotion was with a particular intensity. Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 23.

In his work on Second Temple Jewish monotheism, Richard Bauckham uses the category he calls the God of Israel's *identity*.²² He argues that "early Judaism had clear and consistent ways of characterizing the unique identity of the one God and, thus, distinguishing the one God absolutely from all other reality."²³ They knew who he was.²⁴ Bauckham's category is a relational one rather than one that emphasizes ontology or function. The two ways Jews in the Second Temple Period characterized God's unique, personal identity was: (1) God in relation to Israel, (2) God in relation to all reality.²⁵ First, they knew their God by his divinely revealed name, YHWH, and they knew his acts in history in relation to Israel.²⁶ In the OT, the authors identify YHWH as the one who delivered Israel from Egypt (e.g. Exod. 20:2; Deut. 4:32-39; Isa. 43:15-17) and as characteristically "merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." (Exod. 34:6; cf. Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:11; Ps. 103:8; Jon. 4:2; Sir. 2:11; Pr. Man. 7; 4 Ezra 7:132-140; Jos. Asen. 11:10; 1QH⁴ 11:29-30).²⁷ Second, they identify God by referring to his unique relation to all reality, especially as "Creator of all things and Sovereign Ruler of all things."²⁸ Unlike Hurtado, Bauckham does not see God's uniqueness over against all reality and other gods as fundamentally distinguished by worship or a pattern of cultic devotion; rather, God's uniqueness was based on the fact

²² See, Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 1-17, 60-94, 107-126, 152-172. Bauckham notes that the divine identity is not the exact same as modern definitions of personal identity. He stresses, though, the category identity is appropriate since Jews were concerned with who God is as opposed to what he is. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 6-7.

²³ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, ix.

²⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 6.

²⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 7.

²⁶ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 7.

²⁷ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 8.

²⁸ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 8. Bauckham notes that the OT brings these two themes/relations together in Israel's eschatological expectations in which YHWH will reveal himself to the nations and establish his universal kingship (e.g. Isa. 40-55). Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 8.

that Israel's God, YHWH, "is sole Creator of all things and sole Ruler of all things."²⁹ It is on this basis – his uniqueness as Creator and Ruler – that God alone was worthy of worship.³⁰ So whereas Hurtado sees worship as the defining feature of God's uniqueness, Bauckham argues that worship was a reaction to God's uniqueness.³¹ Jewish exclusive worship of their God was recognition of his unique identity and there were scruples against activities that people might have seen as worship directed towards another figure, whether human or other.³² The various "intermediary figures" between God and humanity were of two categories: (1) principal agents and exalted patriarchs (e.g. high angels (e.g. *1 En.* 20:1-8)), (2) personified or hypostatized divine aspects.³³ Within the second category were God's Word and Wisdom (e.g. Ps. 33:9; Jer. 10:12).³⁴ They did not violate God's uniqueness because they expressed God to the world as aspects of the divine identity.³⁵ So Bauckham conceives of the divine identity as the way Jews in the Second Temple Period indicated the uniqueness of the God over against other deities and heavenly figures, and they recognized this through exclusive worship directed toward

²⁹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 9. Sole Creator: Isa. 40:26, 28; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12, 18; 48:13; 51:16; Neh. 9:6; Hos. 13:4 LXX; 2 Macc. 1:24; Sir. 43:33; Bel 5; Jub. 12:3-5; Sib. Or. frg. 1:5-6; Sib. Or. frg. 3; Sib. Or. Frg. 5; 2 En. 47:3-4; 66:4; Apoc. Ab. 7:10; Ps-Sophocles; Jos. Asen. 12:1-2; T. Job 2:4. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 9n8. Sole Ruler: Dan. 4:34-35; Bel 5; Add. Esth. 13:9-11; 16:18, 21; 3 Macc. 2:2-3; 6:2; Wid. 12:13; Sir. 18:1-3; Sib. Or. 3:10, 19; Sib. Or. frg. 1:7, 15, 17, 35; *1 En.* 9:5; 84:3; *2 En.* 33:7; *2 Bar.* 54:13; Jos. A.J. 1:155-156. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 9n9.

³⁰ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 9.

³¹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 9, 11-12.

³² Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 11. The "pagan monotheism" in which some saw a high God over all has some similarities to Jewish monotheism, but Jewish monotheistic tendencies put God in a unique category rather than on the top of a spectrum of divinity, and they exclusively worship him. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 13. See also Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 107-126. In Second Temple Jewish literature that refers to Israel's God as ὑψιστὸς does not refer to him as the highest in a pantheon; rather, it emphasized his utter transcendent uniqueness. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 107-126.

³³ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 14-16. The Son of Man figure in 1 Enoch is the sole exception, says Bauckham. He partially fulfills the divine identity criteria because he participates in divine sovereignty. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 16.

³⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 16.

³⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 16-17.

their God.³⁶ Their recognition of YHWH's uniqueness and exclusive worship of him constituted monotheism.

James McGrath agrees with Hurtado that worship was an important factor "defining what Jewish allegiance to one God alone meant and how it was recognized."³⁷ But he disagrees with him about what is meant by worship. He judges that Bauckham's characterization of Jewish monotheism in terms of divine identity and uniqueness is inadequate on the basis of Philo, *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?* (206).³⁸ The text that describes the λόγος, McGrath contends, blurs the sharp line Bauckham draws between Israel's God and all creation into something more like a "hierarchy of being."³⁹ He also states that Bauckham incorrectly downplays the importance of so-called intermediary figures in Second Temple Jewish literature.⁴⁰ To understand Hellenistic Jewish monotheism, McGrath begins with outsider perceptions about Jewish worship of one God.⁴¹ Relatively non-polemical outside observers, he finds, tended to describe Jewish religion "as being focused on only one God and as rejecting images," with rejection of image-worship being the main distinction.⁴² For Hellenistic Jewish monotheism the make-or-break issue was "sacrificial worship of the one God without images."⁴³ Instead of seeing either Hurtado's pattern of cultic devotional practices or Bauckham's divine identity as the absolute criterion that maintains the uniqueness of the God of Israel,

³⁶ See also, Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 152-172. Bauckham calls this link between God's uniqueness and exclusive worship directed to him was a "necessary link" in the Jewish Scriptures. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 153.

³⁷ McGrath, *Only True God*, 7.

³⁸ McGrath, *Only True God*, 13-14.

³⁹ McGrath, *Only True God*, 13. Not unlike Fredriksen's contention.

⁴⁰ McGrath, *Only True God*, 21.

⁴¹ He states that it is "the best place to begin." McGrath, *Only True God*, 26.

⁴² McGrath, *Only True God*, 28.

⁴³ McGrath, *Only True God*, 35, 29-30.

McGrath's contention is that most or all Jews held the conviction that it was acceptable to offer animal sacrifices only to the one God.⁴⁴

Chris Tilling follows to some degree Bauckham and Hurtado, but he parts ways with both at key points. He criticizes Bauckham on two main points. First, he notes that Bauckham's categories do not always hold in Second Temple Jewish literature. Jews did not always maintain God's unique identity in the ways Bauckham argues (i.e. Jews sometimes "violate" Bauckham's divine identity).⁴⁵ Second, Bauckham focuses too heavily on his second relational category (God in relation to all reality) rather than the arguably more important first relational category (God in relation to Israel).⁴⁶ Despite these critiques, he affirms that Bauckham is on the right track with his emphasis on the categories that define Jewish monotheism being relational.⁴⁷ Tilling's emphasis on the relational aspects of Jewish monotheism coincides with his critique of Hurtado. He judges Hurtado's cultic worship criterion as inadequate and as shirking too much the specific relational categories in his characterization of faith-in-God rhetoric.⁴⁸ Cultic worship, rather than being the decisive criterion, is part of a pattern of worship that is

⁴⁴ McGrath, *Only True God*, 35-37.

⁴⁵ Tilling, *PDC*, 61.

⁴⁶ Tilling, *PDC*, 62. To note, Tilling critiques Bauckham in these ways specifically in relation to how Bauckham connects Jewish monotheism/the divine identity to early Christology. The critiques refer to his construal of Jewish monotheism in general, though.

⁴⁷ Tilling, *PDC*, 61. Tilling surveys major OT theologies and monographs, and notes the relational emphasis of Jewish faith in God in all of them. Tilling, *PDC*, 68. In his biblical theological study subtitled, *An Old Testament Theology of Worship*, Timothy Pierce defines worship as "the relational phenomena between the created and the Creator, which find expression in both specific events and lifestyle commitments." Timothy M. Pierce, *Enthroned on Our Praise: An Old Testament Theology of Worship* (NAC 4; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), 3. This definition helpfully casts a wider net than Hurtado and McGrath in line with Tilling, although the term *lifestyle* is ambiguous. Nevertheless, the point is made that worship involves the whole life of the individual, which includes cultic worship as a part of the larger pattern, rather than simply reducing worship to involvement in cultic worship.

⁴⁸ Tilling, *PDC*, 70-71.

more comprehensive.⁴⁹ Relationally-focused Jewish monotheism was so pervasive that, “practically all Second Temple texts operate within a similar relational framework for understanding their God,” and it “was expressed in various religious practices and devotions.”⁵⁰ Paul also expresses faith in God in relational terms.⁵¹ Even the most abstract monotheism in Jewish literature, e.g. Philo, speaks of God this way.⁵² Likewise, in those texts which seem to include worship of other figures that are not Israel’s one God and seem to blur the line between God and all other reality (e.g. *Similitudes of Enoch*; Sirach 44-50; *Life of Adam and Eve*), “the God-relation *pattern* of data remains descriptive of the deity alone.”⁵³ So Tilling argues, “‘the decisive criterion by which Jews maintained the uniqueness of God’ was the unique YHWH-relation, of which an important yet subsidiary part was cultic worship of YHWH.”⁵⁴

In terms of how the individual Israelite or Israel as a whole related to YHWH, the relation to the God of the covenant in terms of his saving acts in history and the directive for the covenant people to respond in a whole life filled with utter devotion and love toward him was central to the characterization of God’s uniqueness. This more comprehensive understanding of specifically Jewish-style worship as one that pervades (ideally) the entire life of the faithful, who is/are related to God by covenant, finds its quintessential expression in the *Shema*:

Hear, Israel: YHWH our God, YHWH is one. And you shall love YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall repeat them to

⁴⁹ Tilling, *PDC*, 60-61.

⁵⁰ Tilling, *PDC*, 68.

⁵¹ Tilling, *PDC*, 68-70.

⁵² Tilling, *PDC*, 68. E.g. Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1:5; 2:162, 165; *Contempl. Life* 2, 4; *Drunkenness* 106. Tilling, *PDC*, 68n31.

⁵³ Tilling, *PDC*, 72, 196-233.

⁵⁴ Tilling, *PDC*, 71.

your son, and shall talk about them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you arise. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be phylacteries between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (Deut. 6:4-9).⁵⁵

The *Shema* articulates the fact that Jewish worship “by its very nature and content [...] reached beyond the cultus into the life, habits, goals and desires of the faithful, in their waking and sleeping, in their food habits, social interactions, business transactions etc.”⁵⁶ It demonstrates this in precisely relational categories that govern the whole of life by describing how Israel should respond to their covenant Lord who saved them. The Gospels, Josephus, and the Mishnah reflect the importance of the *Shema* as a central Jewish confession into the first century and beyond (Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28; Josephus, *A.J.* 4:212; *m. Ber.* 1.1-5; cf. 1 Cor. 8:4-6). This utter loving devotion for God and confession of God’s uniqueness was not restricted to the cultus; rather, the exact opposite was the case.⁵⁷ Both the Psalms and the Prophets variously confirm this picture. The Psalms express longing for the presence of God specifically when absent from the cultus (e.g. Ps. 63, 84).⁵⁸ The prophets routinely scorned worship that remained only in the cultus (e.g. Isa. 58:1-14; Amos 5:21-27; Zech. 7-8).⁵⁹ Furthermore, the context of the *Shema* is rooted in the loving covenantal relationship between YHWH the suzerain who redeemed Israel the vassal in order to bring them into unswerving allegiance to him over against idolatry (E.g. Exod. 19:3-6; 20:2-6; Deut. 4:20, 23-25, 33-40; 5:2, 6-10; cf. esp. Isa. 40-48).

⁵⁵ Translation my own.

⁵⁶ Tilling, *PDC*, 60.

⁵⁷ Tilling, *PDC*, 60.

⁵⁸ Tilling, *PDC*, 60.

⁵⁹ Tilling, *PDC*, 60.

Some other relational categories help highlight how Israel expressed the uniqueness of God. The OT routinely characterizes God as one jealous for his covenant people that they might not turn from him to idols (Exod. 20:5; 34:14-17; Num. 24:11; Deut. 4:24; 6:13-15; 32:16-21). Israel's defection from their covenant God to idolatry provoked YHWH to anger (e.g. Num. 24; Deut. 4:25; 32:21-22). The prophet Hosea acts as a living metaphor of the relationship between God and Israel. Israel acts like an adulterous whore wife to YHWH by worshiping idols (e.g. Hos. 3:1; cf. Isa. 54:5-6; 62:5; Jer. 3:18-20). Israel's relation to God is also described in terms of a father-son relationship (e.g. Exod. 4:22-23; Jer. 31:9; Hos. 11:1). A final defining set of characteristics associated with YHWH in his covenant relation to Israel is that he is exceedingly slow to anger, gracious, faithful, loving, and merciful (e.g. Exod. 33:19; 34:6-9; Num. 14:18; Deut. 4:31; 5:10; 2 Chron. 30:9; Neh. 9:17; Pss. 86:15; 103:8; 111:4; 116:5; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). These further descriptions of Israel's relation to YHWH conforms to the relational emphasis in expressing God's uniqueness, whether it is suzerain-vassal, husband-wife, father-son, or their corollaries: the (ideal) all consuming loving commitment for God, God's jealousy for his people, and his steadfast mercy.

From this survey of recent scholarship on ancient Jewish monotheism, a number of conclusions present themselves. The primary conclusion is that it is appropriate to speak of Jewish monotheism in the first century A.D., properly defined. It is defined relationally as an exclusive all-consuming love and devotion, which includes cultic devotion, to Israel's categorically unique covenant deity YHWH. Within this definition one notes two subsidiary points. First, while Bauckham focuses his attention mainly on

the way Jews in the Second Temple period characterized God's unique identity in terms of his relation to all reality, it's arguably more helpful to understand how they understood God's uniqueness in terms of their covenant relation with him as primary.⁶⁰ Second, Hurtado's focus on specifically cultic devotion does not adequately capture this whole-life aspect of faith and worship.⁶¹ In fact, this "unique YHWH-relation" subsumes the cultic worship within it and provides a more appropriate analytic category to describe what Jews maintained was the decisive criterion of God's uniqueness.⁶² As a result, the unique YHWH-relation provides the most appropriate context for early Christian discourse about God and whether or not early Christians, James included, had a divine Christology.

⁶⁰ Of course this is not to underestimate their insistence on God's uniqueness in relation to all reality.

⁶¹ Tilling, *PDC*, 71. This applies also (even more) to McGrath's focus on sacrificial worship without images.

⁶² Tilling, *PDC*, 71. This also contravenes McGrath's contention that sacrificial worship without images was the decisive criterion, which is even more narrow than Hurtado's cultic worship pattern criterion.

CHAPTER 3

James's Relation to God

If the uniqueness of God was understood relationally in Second Temple Judaism, then it will be instructive to survey briefly how James himself understands his relation to the figure he normally calls “God.”¹ It will also help erect some general expectations for whether James has a divine Christology. If the relational pattern between James (and Christians) and “the Lord Jesus Christ” is depicted in relational categories analogous to those of God in Jewish monotheism and in James, then one must conclude that James has a divine Christology. That is, James would understand the one Lord God of Israel as God (“Father”) and the Lord Jesus.

The term θεός occurs sixteen times in the letter of James,² and the term κύριος occurs fourteen times.³ James 1:1 gives the first indication that the normal distribution of those terms might conform to a general pattern that has “God” and “Lord” as distinct yet closely linked figures.⁴ Another designation James uses to refer to God is πατήρ (Jas. 1:17, 27; 3:9). The overarching depiction of God is as the covenant deity/divine benefactor in relation to his people.⁵ James is God’s slave (1:1); God is a most generous

¹ This thesis focuses strictly on the author of the book of James rather than the historical James more broadly.

² Jas. 1:1, 5, 13, 20, 27; 2:5, 19, 23; 3:9; 4:4, 6, 7, 8.

³ Jas. 1:1, 7; 2:1; 3:9; 4:10, 15; 5:4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15. Also relevant is “the name” (2:7; 5:10, 14).

⁴ James 3:9 does indicate that James does not use κύριος exclusively to refer to the Lord Jesus.

⁵ Covenant deity and divine benefactor are not mutually exclusive categories. One might even call them corresponding relations to refer that the same relationship with different categories. For God as benefactor in James, see Alicia Batten, “God in the Letter of James: Patron or Benefactor?” in *The Social World of the New Testament: Insights and Models* (ed. Jerome H. Neyrey and Eric C Stewart; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 49-61. For God as benefactor in antiquity, see Jerome H. Neyrey, “God, Benefactor and Patron: The Major Cultural Model for Interpreting the Deity in Greco-Roman Antiquity,” *JSNT* 27.4 (2005): 465-492. Interestingly Josephus portrayed the God-Israel covenant relationship in terms of a patron-client relationship. See Paul Spilsbury, “God and Israel in Josephus: A Patron-Client Relationship,” in *Understanding Josephus: Seven Perspectives* (ed. Steve Mason; JSPSS 32; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 172-191. Spilsbury summarizes, “Josephus has retained the basic meaning of the

and single-minded benefactor who does not exploit his people through his benefactor-recipient relation with his them (1:5); he does not tempt (1:13); he the Father of lights, the Creator from whom divine benefactions come (1:17); he is righteous (1:20); God is the Father who cares for orphans and widows (1:27); he chose the poor in the world who are rich in faith to be heirs of his kingdom (2:5); for God's people, love is a fundamental posture in relation to him (2:5); he is one (2:19); faith in him and friendship with him are proper relations to him (2:23); Christians bless their Father (3:9); God stands against the rebellious vassals, his enemies (4:4, 6); he is gives grace to the humble (4:6); his people must humble themselves before him and "draw near" to him (4:7, 8); and to those who draw near to him he draws near (4:8). A basic pattern emerges under the overarching categories of divine covenant suzerain-vassal and divine benefactor-recipient relationship. The following gives a brief, non-exhaustive outline of how James and Christians relate to the figure James calls "God" and "Father."⁶

1. Various expressions of God-devotion

To open his letter James describes himself, the letter's sender, as a "James, slave of God" (Ιακωβος θεου...δουλος; Jas. 1:1). The opening clause sets up the fundamental relation between James and God. He presents himself in line with the OT prophets as "slave of God."⁷ So James has a basic posture of service and allegiance to God.

covenant (i.e. a special contractual relationship between God and Israel,) but has replaced covenant language with terminology drawn from the patron-client model of social relations in the ancient Mediterranean world." Spilsbury, "God and Israel in Josephus," 173-174.

⁶ The purpose of the outline is not to develop a full theology of God in James; rather, it is to highlight the shape of his theology in relational categories in order to provide a background for James's Christology.

⁷ E.g. Deut. 32:36; 1 Sam. 23:10-11; 1 Kgs. 8:23, 28, 29, 30; 2 Kgs. 21:10; Ezra 5:11; 9:11; Mic. 3:24 OG; Amos 3:7; Zech. 1:6.

In James 1:5, James commands his audience to ask God for wisdom.⁸ Here James draws from Jesus's teaching on prayer and connects it to the wisdom tradition that describes wisdom as God's gift (e.g. Prov. 2:6; Sir. 1:1, 8; 51:17; Wis. 8:21; 9:17; 4Q185 2:11-12).⁹ James is instructing his audience to draw on their existentially real relationship with God. The wisdom-lacker must petition God "in faith (ἐν πίστει) disputing nothing" (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος; 1:6a).¹⁰ The qualifier "in faith" is essential to one's relation to God in opposition to duplicitous allegiance (cf. 2:5, 14-26).

In James 1:12 and 2:5, James expresses that God promised to give eschatological life "to those who love him" (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν).¹¹ Loving God is the central expression of devotion to him. It is the fundamental covenant virtue in one's relation to God as exemplified in the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-9). Deuteronomy stipulates that Israel should participate in an all-encompassing, whole-life loving relationship with suzerain YHWH.¹²

⁸ As an imperative here αἰτεῖτο has the force of command rather mere permission. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 486.

⁹ Bauckham, *James*, 86.

¹⁰ Most translations of διακρινόμενος are "doubting." But a better understanding and translation is "disputing." See "Peter Spitaler, "James 1:5-8: A Dispute with God," *CBQ* 71, 2009: 560-579.

¹¹ James 1:12 has a textual issue in the final clause that affects the meaning of the text. The four textual options are ὁ κύριος, κύριος, ὁ θεος, or omission. So the clause reads, "which [God/the Lord/omission] promised to those loving him." The NA28 committee judged omission as the best reading, as did the UBS4 committee with an "A" rating. There are three main lines of argument: (1) the word "God" is, in rabbinical writings, often supplied mentally rather than explicitly in the text, (2) "the earlier and better witnesses support" omission, (3) later witnesses likely supplied an explicit subject of the perceived gap by adding κύριος, ὁ κύριος, ὁ θεος. See, Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd Ed.; Stuttgart: UBS, 1994), 608. That a scribe supplied ὁ θεος makes sense, since the next verse (1:13) talks about God, and the almost identical clause 2:5 has God as the clear referent. So it is most likely that the text does not have an explicit subject. And based on the parallel clause in 2:5, the likely referent is God rather than the risen Lord. But if the referent is the Lord Jesus, this is further evidence for an expression of Christ-devotion. This would support that the relation between Christ and the believer is, for James, analogous to the relation between YHWH and Israel in the OT.

¹² E.g. Deut. 6:4-9; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:4; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20; cf. Josh. 22:5; 23:11; cf. Tob. 14:7; m. Barakot 1:1-1:5; Rom. 8:28. Other texts show that YHWH loves Israel (e.g. Deut. 7:8; 1 Kgs. 10:9; 2 Chron. 9:8; Ps. 86:2 OG). So the love-relation is a two-way relationship of subject to subject.

Worshipping YHWH was to reach all aspects of the Israelite's life, not just the cultus.¹³

Furthermore, Jesus taught that loving God was the greatest commandment (Mark 12:29).

So James employs the classic Jewish monotheistic motif that recognizes that all-consuming love for God is essential to one's relation to him.

In James 1:27, James states, "pure and undefiled religion before the God and Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction, to keep oneself spotless from the world."¹⁴ Devotion to God entails caring for the most helpless in society. James taps into a biblical and Jewish motif that runs through the OT and Second Temple literature. God is one who cares for the most socially and economically marginalized and helpless (e.g. Ps. 67:6 OG) and opposes those who do injustice to them (e.g. Deut. 27:19). Seemingly pious speech without accompanying works is nothing but hollow worship.¹⁵ James, therefore, exhorts Christians to imitate their God with activity that conforms to his character. God is "Father" to the fatherless and ultimate benefactor, and Christians should extend that to those for whom God cares.

In James 2:14-26, James illustrates that bare faith without works is dead (2:17) and "not able to save" (2:14). Faith, if it is genuine, is a working and living faith that shows itself through right conduct (2:18). While it is good to assent to the proposition, "God is one" (2:19), it is insufficient because even the demons, malevolent anti-God beings who shudder in fear before him, affirm it (2:19). So James declares that this type of faith is empty and dead (2:20). He uses Abraham (2:21-23) and Rahab (2:25) to support his point and to show what this working faith in God looks like. Working-faith

¹³ Tilling, *PDC*, 60.

¹⁴ Translation my own.

¹⁵ Ng notes, "James here follows the prophetic tradition in the OT in denouncing empty words of piety or cultic worship while advocating merciful deeds and upright lives" (e.g. Isa. 1:11-17; Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:8). Esther Yue L. Ng, "Father-God Language and Old Testament Allusions in James," *TynBul* 54.2 (2003): 48.

resulted in Abraham being called “God’s friend” (2:23). So working-faith is constitutive of a positive relation to God. It is an existential reality lived out through ethical conduct on the vertical and horizontal planes.

In James 3 there are two main instances of devotion to God. First, in James 3:9 praising or blessing (εὐλογέω) “our Lord and Father” is a positive action toward God. Blessing God was a common feature of OT and Jewish devotional life.¹⁶ The second instance involves wisdom. In 3:13, James reintroduces the topic of wisdom (cf. 1:5-7). In 3:17 he describes the “wisdom from above” (ἡ ἀνωθεν σοφία). He characterizes it with eight descriptors in a 1 + 7 structure. “First,” he says, it is pure (ἀγνή), “then” it is peaceful (εἰρηνική), gentle (ἐπιεικής), compliant (εὐπειθής), full of mercy and good fruits (μεστή ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν), undivided (ἀδιάκριτος), and without hypocrisy (ἀνυπόκριτος).¹⁷ The wisdom from above works out in one’s life in peaceful action (3:18).¹⁸ The one who is wise “must show his works from good conduct in the gentleness of wisdom” (3:13). Being wise entails conforming to the character of the wisdom-giver.

In direct contrast to the “wisdom from above,” conformity to which results in peaceful conduct (3:17-18), is James 4:1-10 wherein James employs a significant number of military and war terms and metaphors. He uses terms like πόλεμοι (wars; 4:1), μάχαι (battles; 4:1), στρατευομένων (serving as soldiers; 4:1), φονεύετε (you kill; 4:2), ζηλοῦτε

¹⁶ E.g. Gen. 14:20; Exod. 18:10; Ezra 7:27; Neh. 9:5; Ps. 88:53 OG; 134:19 OG; 1 En. 9:4; Ps. Sol. 6:4; T. Job 19:4; Jos. Asen. 15:13

¹⁷ The 1 + 7 structure is possibly important, since it reflects the wholeness and oneness motifs in James. The two sets of alliteration may also prove important (4 epsilon (εἰρηνική, ἐπιεικής, εὐπειθής, μεστή ἐλέους)) + 3 alphas (ἀγαθῶν, ἀδιάκριτος, ἀνυπόκριτος) = 7 total attributes of wisdom. It is τελείος wisdom because it derives from God himself.

¹⁸ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AYB 37 A; New Haven; Yale University Press, 1995), 275.

(you strive; 4:2), μάχεσθε (you fight; 4:2), and πολεμεῖτε (you war; 4:2). James 4:4

heightens the war imagery with the theme of betrayal and opposition:

μοικαλίδες, οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου ἔχθρα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν, ὃς ἐάν οὖν
βουληθῇ φίλος εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου, ἔχθρὸς τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσταται

Adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility with God? Therefore, whoever wants to be the world's friend becomes God's enemy.

For James, it is imperative that the Christian community allies itself with God as their covenant God in the battle. Like Abraham, they should be friends of God through a faith that produces good works (2:23). The two main positive exhortations are that they must subject (ὑποτάγητε) themselves to God (4:7) and draw near (έγγισατε) to him (4:8). It is a matter of wholehearted allegiance over against trying to serve the proverbial two masters – God and “the world.” So James, after he exhorts the community to “draw near to God,” issues two parallel commands:

A	B	C
Καθαρίσατε (cleanse)	χεῖρας (hands)	ἀμαρτωλοί (sinners)
καὶ (and)	Ἄγνισατε (purify)	καρδίας (hearts)
		δίψυχοι (double-minded)

James melds the military imagery with the relational motif of God as benefactor and suzerain.¹⁹ Therefore, single-minded fidelity to their covenant God is imperative.

2. *What James contrasts with God-devotion*

In James 1:6-7, James contrasts the positive disposition, one of trust and faith in God based on God's munificent character, with the negative one – duplicity. Verse 6b elaborates the reason why the negative disposition is contrary to right relation to God by

¹⁹ An example of overlap with military, political, and benefaction relations is the Herod-Caesar relationship. Herod was political subordinate to Caesar, and inscriptions Herod had inscribed call him “Friend of Caesar” (φιλόκαταρος and “Friend of the Romans” (φιλορώματος). Adam Kolman Marshak, *The Many Faces of Herod the Great* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 155. The Herod-Caesar relationship offers a helpful analogy to how James is using covenantal and benefaction language in corresponding ways.

employing an aquatic metaphor. James compares one who disputes with God (ὁ διακρινόμενος) to rough sea waters caused by violent winds. Verse 7 connects the metaphor to its conclusion in real life situations by showing the consequences of morally deficient conduct toward God. That is, even if that person asks God for wisdom, they will not receive it “from the Lord” (παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου).²⁰ They do not receive the divine gift of wisdom because that person is δίψυχος, “double-minded,” or “unstable in all his ways” (1:8). Not receiving anything means not receiving wisdom. This non-faithful, not-receiving wisdom person is an ἀνήρ δίψυχος as opposed to being a complete (τέλειος) and whole (όλοκληρος) person (1:4).

In 1:22-27, James contrasts doing the word with only hearing it, even describing such people as self-deceived (1:22; cf. 1:16). James’s “wholeness”/τελ ethical program shows up in the form of a hearing and doing dualism. He holds hearing and doing together as two inseparable actions that one who is devoted to the one inseparable God must conjoin. One who fails to continue in the “perfect law of freedom” (νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας) becomes, as James puts it, a “forgetful hearer” (ἀκροατὴς ἐπιλησμονῆς). In so doing they separate what must remain together. James uses a similar conceptual structure in 1:26. The dualism is between thinking oneself pious or religious, but not controlling one’s speech. What is implied is that being pious entails controlling one’s speech. Again, the one who fails to hold the two together (self-estimation that one is pious and controlling one’s speech) James calls self-deceived (ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ).

²⁰ The referent of κύριος is ambiguous at this point. It could refer to God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ. That James uses θεός in 1:5 does not solve the problem. If the risen Jesus is the referent, the implications would be significant. For James to move seamlessly from discussing the Christian’s relation to God the Father to then speak of the risen Lord in a relationally analogous fashion would contribute to the larger pattern in James’s letter that, like Paul, James understands that the believer’s/church’s relation to the Father is analogous to the relationship with the risen Lord.

Their piety does indeed only “seem” to be (1:26a), since it really is worthless (μάταιος).

This is a sort of “docetic” θρησκεία, true religion in appearance only. Their docetic religiosity is so convincing that they have even deceived themselves into thinking it is real. So, devotion to God entails integrity of character.

In James 2:14-26, another dualism James discusses is between workless, dead faith and working, living faith. For James, faith and works are inseparable. Faith is a necessary precondition for works, but works are a necessary byproduct of faith. To claim to have faith yet to lack the works that would validate that faith shows that such “faith” has no basis in reality. The without-works faith is “empty” (ἀργή; 2:21) and “dead” (νεκρά; 2:26) just as the “religion” that neglects caring for orphans and widows is worthless (1:26). Mere intellectual assent to the true proposition that God is one, lip-service to the *Shema*, on its own without works is properly demonic. The *Shema* does not end with κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἰς ἐστιν (Deut. 6:4 LXX). What follows in Deuteronomy 6:5-9 describes the human side of the stipulated covenant relationship between YHWH and Israel as one of total love and devotion in the whole of one’s life in the covenant community. If someone affirms the first clause of the *Shema* but then acts as if the rest did not exist, that person has not understood what the first clause means and has been shown to be fraudulent. So in contrast to Abraham and Rahab who evidence this working faith that resulted in life for Isaac and life of the Israelite messengers is the demonic, empty, death-laden bare “faith” that cannot save.

In James 3:9, James contrasts the positive devotion to God, blessing him, with cursing “the people created according to God’s likeness.” This contrast is a part of James’s concern for speech ethics more broadly in 3:1-12. The ethical standard, the

τέλειος ἄνηρ (“whole man”), is “able to bridle also the whole body” (3:2). What the bridle is to the horse and the rudder is to the boat (3:4), the tongue is to the body (3:5). In 3:6-8 James describes the tongue in negative terms. He employs the metaphor that the tongue is fire (πῦρ), “the world of unrighteousness” (ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας), “defiling the whole body” (ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα), “setting on fire the wheel of life” (φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως) (3:7), not able to be controlled by humans, an unstable evil (ἀκατάστατον κακόν), full of death-bringing poison (μεστὴ ιοῦ θανατηφόρου) (3:8). The unbridled tongue is a part of the program of death. So James starkly contrasts praising the Father who brings life (cf. 1:17-18) with the anti-God, death-bringing action – cursing God’s images (3:9). He reiterates, “from the same mouth comes out praise and curse” (3:10). The two actions are two opposing speech-specific manifestations of the wisdom from above and the wisdom from below (3:13-18). What is and what should be are illegitimately aligned (3:9-10). Once again James puts the death program in contrast to devotion to God.

As noted above, James 4:1-10 contains many war terms and metaphors. In contrast to right relation to God – friendship with him (4:3-4); submitting to God/opposing the devil (4:7); drawing near to God (4:8); cleansing hands and purifying hearts (4:8); humbling oneself before the Lord (4:10) – is a state of affairs in which people war against each other and are God’s enemies. The program of death is again contrasted with God-devotion. On this anti-God side James puts a variety of things. There are wars and battles in the community of faith with the cravings serving as the soldiers among their members in the wars/battles (4:1). The community lusts without having, and murders and jealously strives without obtaining (4:2). They “war and battle” (4:2). They

do not have because they do not ask (4:2), and even when they ask they do not receive because they ask evilly (4:3). This state of warlike conflict within the community constitutes “friendship with the world,” and thus enmity with God (4:4). James calls them adulteresses, a designation that recalls the OT prophetic judgments upon Israel for “adultery” against YHWH for serving other deities (e.g. Hos. 10:2).²¹ James appeals to Scripture to demonstrate his point that God is actively opposing the state of affairs in the community (4:6). They are ὑπερήφανοι (arrogant) who need ὑποτάγησαι (to be humble). They are sinners (ἀμαρτωλοί) and double-minded (δίψυχοι) rather than whole (τέλειοι; 1:4) and pure (1:27).

3. God's presence and activity

James connects God's activity to his role as benefactor to his people. In James 1:5, God actively gives wisdom to those who faithfully ask him. Similarly, he will give “the crown of life” to those who love him (1:12; cf. Deut. 6:4-9). In 1:12, in typical fashion of Jewish wisdom, James issues a *makarism* (cf. Pss. 1:1; 31:2; 39:5; 83:6; 111:1; 126:5; Prov. 3:13; 8:24; 28:14; Job 5:17; Sir. 14:1, 20; Pss. Sol. 6:1; 10:1; Isa. 56:2; Dan. 12:12; Matt. 5:3-11). It reads: “Blessed is the man who endures temptation, because by becoming tried and true he will receive the crown of life that was promised [by God] to those who love him.”²² The *makarism* depicts God as postured to give life to his faithful people. God is understood implicitly as the one who blesses the one “who endures temptation” (1:12).²³

²¹ Karen H. Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” in *What Does the Scripture Say? Studies in the Function of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Vol. 2: The Letters and Liturgical Traditions; eds. Craig A. Evans and H. Daniel Zacharias; New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 153. For a treatment of “spiritual adultery” throughout the entire OT, see Raymond C. Ortlund, *God's Unfaithful Wife: A Biblical Theology of Spiritual Adultery* (NSBT 2; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996).

²² Translation my own.

²³ Broadly defined, a *makarism* is a literary form, usually a sentence, that begins with the word μακάριος, typically rendered “blessed” or “happy.”

This, James explains, is “because, after becoming tried and true, he will receive the crown of life,” i.e. eschatological life. (1:12b).²⁴ So as with Jesus’s *makarisms* in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3-11), James’s statement is eschatological in character by contrasting a current negative condition or situation (testing/temptation) with the expected positive eschatological condition.²⁵

What God does not do is tempt (1:13). He gives “every good gift and complete present” (1:17). He, by an act of his will, “birthed” the community of life that James calls the first-fruits of his creation (1:18). In 2:5, James uses the language of election and reversal of honor status. God chose the poor in the world, the end for which is twofold: (1) to be “rich in faith,” (2) to be “heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him.” God will enact a divine reversal of their status. The poor “in the world” will not only be “rich in faith,” but inherit their Father’s kingdom.

In 4:4-10, James employs benefactor language. Having established the internal conflict among the community by casting it in war terminology, he calls them φίλος κόσμου rather than φίλος θεοῦ like their father Abraham (4:4; cf. 2:23). James states, “he gives the greater grace” (μείζωνα δε δίδωσιν χάριν; 4:6a). He quotes Proverbs 3:34 to ground his argument, ὁ θεος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν. God’s superior benefaction in giving χάρις is the grounds for submitting to him (4:7). James uses a spatial metaphor to describe God’s presence. To those who “draw near to God,” God draws near to them (4:8a). But God is also actively opposed to his ἔχθρα

²⁴ The phrase τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς is also in Rev. 2:10. There, it “is a metaphor for eternal life.” G.K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 244. James 1:12 and Rev. 2:10 refer to the same underlying theme. That is, believers who endure and remain faithful through suffering or temptation, God will give them eschatological life. This understands the genitive τῆς ζωῆς as epexegetical, i.e. τὸν στέφανον = τῆς ζωῆς. “στέφανον,” *BDAG*, 944; Beale, *Revelation*, 244.

²⁵ Bauckham, *James*, 36-37.

(enemies) – the ἀμαρτωλοί (sinners) and δίψυχοι (double-minded), who take “the world” as their suzerain and benefactor and receive violence and death rather than grace and life.

4. Communication between God and believers

Communication between God and believers comes in the context of the benefactor-recipient relationship. In 1:5-7, James commands those in the community who are not “whole and complete,” i.e. those who lack wisdom (*λείπεται σοφίας*), to ask the giver-of-all-freely-and-without-reproach God for wisdom (1:5). But it is necessary to ask *ἐν πίστει* (“in faith”) rather than *διακρινόμενος* (disputing). The latter will receive nothing (1:7), but the former will receive the wisdom for which they asked (1:5c). The precondition for wisdom is trusting the covenantal God.

5. The nature and character of God’s lordship

James depicts God’s main role as the ideal benefactor. Jewish literature sometimes depicts God as the benefactor of his people. For example, Wisdom of Solomon uses benefaction language to describe him as such (Wis. 3:5; 7:23; 11:5; 16:2, 11).²⁶ Some of the Psalms describe God, in relation to his role as covenant Lord and his compassionate character, as a benefactor (Pss. 12:6 OG; 56:3 OG; 77:11 OG).²⁷ James follows in this tradition: God’s benefactions are wisdom (1:5; 3:15, 17), “the crown of life” (1:12), “the kingdom” (2:5), and “grace” (4:6). He gives these in the context of his people’s metaphorically corresponding relations to him: covenantal (suzerain-vassals), filial (Father-children) and friendship (benefactor-recipients).

In James 1:5, he characterizes God’s giving (or, one might say, benefacting) as done “freely and without reproach” to his people. To emphasize the attributiveness of the

²⁶ Batten, “God in the Letter of James,” 52.

²⁷ See also 2 Macc. 10:38. See also how Josephus uses benefactor/patron language to describe God’s relation to Israel in, Spilsbury, “God and Israel in Josephus.”

phrase one could appropriately render the prepositional phrase, *παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὄνειδίζοντος*, as “from the giving-all-without reservation-and-without reproach-God.” God’s character is one of a generous benefactor that, as the two negative adverbial modifiers state, does not hold back or give only *quid pro quo*.²⁸ Positively stated, God who is always present and thus available gives abundantly to those who petition him for wisdom amidst difficult situations. It is for this reason, God’s character and nature, that James issues the imperative to ask God.²⁹

God is opposed to temptation and emphatically does not engage in tempting anyone (1:13). He is no duplicitous benefactor. His gifts are ἀγαθή (“good”) and his presents are τέλειος (“whole”) because he, the source, is ἀγαθός and τέλειος (1:17). James refers to him as “the Father of the luminaries” (1:17), which alludes to Genesis 1 and God’s role as Creator. As God is Creator of the physical cosmos, he is also the Creator of the community of faith, which James calls the first-fruits of his creation (1:18). James 1:17 once again depicts God’s character as the magnanimous benefactor. He notes that “every good gift (*πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ*) and every perfect present (*πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον*) is from above (*ἄνωθεν*), coming down from the Father of the luminaries. James contrasts what is true about God’s lordship with variation and changeability (1:17c). The God of luminaries does not act like the ever-shifting darkness of shadows.

²⁸ BDAG notes that ἀπλῶς with δίδονται has the force of giving to someone “without reservation” or “without having second thoughts about the donation.” ἀπλῶς, BDAG, 104. Regarding ὄνειδίζω BDAG notes that “a special kind of reproach is the suggestion of reluctance that too often accompanies the giving of a gift,” sometimes used as a sort of “verbal extortion” to obtain something from that person. ὄνειδίζω, “BDAG, 710.

²⁹ Batten comments perceptively in connection with James’s anti-patron bent, “the description of God in Jas. 1:5-8 conforms more to the ideal selfless and generous benefactor who provides for the community than to a patron who delights in the honors served up by clients.” Batten, “God in the Letter of James,” 57.

In 1:18, James describes God's relation to his people. In contrast to the anti-life power of ἐπιθυμία ("desire") that births ἀμαρτία ("sin"), which in turn births θάνατος ("death"), the life-giving God "birthed us" (ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς; 1:18). His creative purpose was "in order for us to be firstfruits" (1:18b), which fits well with James's talk about God as Father. In the immediate context he refers to God as the Father of the luminaries (1:17). In short order he refers to God as Father who cares for orphans and widows (1:27), and again as Father in 3:9. So as God is the Creator-Father of the universe, he is also the Creator-Father of the community of faith. The kinship language about God as Father maps onto how James refers to his audience, "the Twelve tribes in the Dispersion" (1:1). He addresses them with filial language as ἀδελφοί μου ("my brothers"; 1:2; 2:1, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 5:12, 19), ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί ("my beloved brothers"; 1:16, 19; 2:5), ἀδελφοί alone ("brothers"; 5:9, 10), and a few singular ἀδελφ-terms (1:9; 2:15; 4:11). God's people are his children and he is exclusively their God and Father. As family members, they refer to each other as siblings.

In 1:27 James calls God "Father" and exhorts believers to care for orphans and widows. It is no coincidence that James uses Father-God language here, since it fits well with the fatherless orphans and widows.³⁰ James defines true piety based on the fact that the Father who cares for orphans (the fatherless) and widows (the fatherless). Caring for the orphans and widows is a classic concern Israel's God has in the OT and Jewish literature.³¹ Philo calls God the one who defends those who cannot defend themselves

³⁰ Widows may be fatherless in the sense that they had no living *paterfamilias* to care for them.

³¹ Exod. 22:20-21; Deut. 10:17-18; 14:28-29; 16:10-11, 14; 24:17, 19, 20, 21; 26:12, 13; 27:19; Pss. 9:35-39 OG; 68:6 OG; 81:3 OG; 93:5-6 OG; 145:9 OG; Sir. 4:8-10; 35:13-15; Zech. 7:9-10; Mal. 3:5; Isa. 1:17, 23; 10:1-2; Jer. 5:28; 7:6; 22:3; Ezek. 22:7.

(Philo, *Spec.* 4:199). So for James, God's people should share God's concern for the socially and economically low.

6. What is contrasted with the nature and character of God's lordship

In 1:13-15, James contrasts the life-giving, supreme benefactor God with an individual's ἐπιθυμία ("desire") that births sin, which in turn births death. God is on the side of life. He birthed the community by his will by the word of truth for the purpose that they would become firstfruit creations (1:18). James contrasts God, the creator of the universe, "the Father of luminaries" (1:17), with the De-creator – death. God does not tempt to evil, instead tempting comes from one's own "desire" (ἐπιθυμία; 1:14). This ἐπιθυμία is actively working against God by "dragging" (ἐξελκόμενος) and "enticing" (δελεαζόμενος) people away (1:14). In stark contrast to God who "birthed us" (ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς), ἐπιθυμία "becomes pregnant and births" (συλλαβοῦσα τίκτει) sin (ἀμαρτία), which then "births" (ἀποκύει) death (θάνατος). The mother of sin and death, the worker of de-creation – desire – stands opposed to the life-giving, creating father of the community – God.

In James 1:13 James contrasts temptation with God's nature. Having already introduced temptation (1:2), exhorted his audience to ask the generously giving God for wisdom in the midst of temptation (1:5-6), and added that those who endure temptation will receive from God "the crown of life" (1:12), he now commands those who are being tempted to expel from their lips the notion that God is the responsible or causal agent who enacts temptation. God does not tempt anyone (1:13). Temptation and God's character are antithetical.³² This is similar to Sirach's remarks:

³² It is clear that James is aware of the binding of Isaac (Gen. 22) from his use of the narrative in Jas. 2:14-26. The Greek of Gen. 22:1 reads, "ὁ θεος ἐπειραζεν Ἀβρααμ." It seems that James consciously contradicts

Say not, “It was God’s doing that I fell away”; for what he hates, he does not do. Say not, “It was he who set me astray”; for he has no need of the wicked (Sir. 15:11-12).³³

Ben Sira does not let a person blame God for their actions; rather, he puts the responsibility to choose on the human agent (Sir. 15:15-17). Since sin does not come at the bequest of God, one cannot blame him for one’s personal sins.³⁴ He, like James, mentions “life and death” with the implication that the all-wise God is on the side of life and against the side of sin and death (Sir. 15:17-20; cf. Jas. 1:12, 15). As it is with Ben Sira it is with James, God is not the fount of evil because God’s character fundamentally opposes it.

In 1:20, James contrasts human anger and God’s righteousness. In 1:19 James commands that everyone “must be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger.” He grounds this ethical exhortation by contrasting the incompatible and opposing states, “man’s anger” (όργὴ ἀνδρὸς) and “God’s righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ). James contrasts God’s character with a human behavior or disposition that is inconsistent with it.³⁵ Also incompatible with God’s character is “every moral uncleanness and abundant vice,” which God’s children should positively set aside because of their irreconcilability (1:21a). Alternative to those vices is receiving “in humility the powerful-to-save-your-lives implanted word” (1:21b). Once again life flows forth from God the source in contrast to vice.

Summary of James’s God-relation.

a text he knows well. But given that he is familiar with Gen. 22 and evidently uses it as binding Scripture, one should at least have an initial apprehension about this interpretation. Contextually it is better to see James, rather than referring to testing in general, as referring to temptation to do evil.

³³ Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (transl. and notes Patrick W. Skehan; AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 267.

³⁴ Di Lella, *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 271.

³⁵ Cf. Sir. 1:22, “No one can justify unjust anger.”

Even though James is but one letter, one can discern that the general shape of how James talks about and relates to his God comports with the Jewish-style relationally-focused monotheism of the Second Temple period. When analyzed in terms of James's and his community's relation to God, the relational pattern emerges in six categories:

- (1) Various expressions of God-devotion: Being a slave of God (1:1), asking God for wisdom (1:5), loving God (1:12; 2:5), serving orphans and widows (1:27), having working faith (2:14-26), blessing God (3:9), subjecting selves to and drawing near to God (4:7-8).
- (2) What James contrasts with God-devotion: duplicity (1:6-7), hearing the word without doing (1:22-27), dead, without-works faith (2:14-26), cursing people (3:9), inner-community warlike conflict (4:1-10).
- (3) God's presence and activity: God the benefactor and covenant God gives wisdom (1:5), eschatological life (1:12; 2:5), grace (4:6), and draws near to his faithful people (4:8).
- (4) Communication between God and believers: ask for wisdom in faith and receive it (1:5-7).
- (5) The nature and character of God's lordship: munificent benefactor (1:5, 17), on the side of life as the Father of the community (1:18), cares for the socially and economically low (1:27).
- (6) What is contrasted with the nature and character of God's lordship: "desire," sin, and death (1:13-15), temptation (1:13), human anger (1:20).

Furthermore, James regularly uses these categories together. For example, in James 1:5-8, he instructs those undergoing trials to ask God for wisdom (communication between God and believers). God is the one James knows as the all-generous benefactor who gives wisdom to his people who ask for it (nature of God's lordship; God's presence and activity) and to whom believers should trust in contrast to acting in a double-minded and duplicitous way (God-devotion; what is contrasted with God-devotion). James's relation to God is not a simple abstract, cognitive one; rather, he regularly brings the various aspects of the "God-relation" together in concrete situations. He draws upon the community's relation to God to ground his ethical exhortations (e.g. 2:14-26; 3:9; 4:1-10). As such, the relationship James and his community have with God constitutes an

existential reality that guides all of life. Thus, what the “God-relation” pattern of data does for this study is provide a possible way to analyze James’s Christology in order to decide whether it too comports with the relationally shaped all-consuming allegiance to the one God of Israel. It calibrates, as it were, expectations for what shape a divine Christology might take.

CHAPTER 4

James 5:1-11 – A Gateway to James’s Christology

Discussion of James’s Christology usually begins with the two references to “the Lord Jesus Christ” in James 1:1 and 2:1, but as integral as those texts are to understanding James’s Christology, James 5:1-11 arguably offers a longer and more sustained treatment of Christology. This paper contends that the “Lord” in 5:1-11 is consistently referring to the Lord Jesus. Most commentators do not take this view. They typically hold the position that in 5:1-11 James uses κύριος to refer to God in 5:4, 10, and 11 and to refer to Jesus in 5:7 and 8.¹ Slightly different is Allison’s position. He asserts that “surely ‘the Lord’ is God, not Jesus” in 3:9; 4:10, 15; 5:4, and probably also 5:10-11.² But regarding 5:7-8, because James uses an unqualified “Lord” (i.e. not “Lord Jesus” or “Lord Jesus Christ”), Christians could understand the Parousia as the coming of the Lord Jesus, and Jews could understand it as the coming of the Lord God.³ The possibility Allison proposes lends itself to James having a divine Christology. If Christians relate to the Lord Jesus in the same way Jews relate to the Lord God (and especially if the author of James himself is a Jewish Christian), they used the same categories to understand themselves in relation to their Lord. Already Allison’s minimalist and non-divine christological (due to lack of evidence) reading, lends itself to a divine Christology in James. But virtually no

¹ See Chapter 1 above in “Survey of Recent Scholarship on James’s Christology;” Johnson, *Letter of James*, 302-303; James Hardy Ropes, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1916), 293; Sophie Laws, *The Epistle of James* (HNTC; San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1980), 202-203, 208. Allison’s statement concerning 5:11 is indicative of how commentators speak about 5:4, 10, and 11: “Here ‘the Lord’ must once again be God, not Jesus.” Allison, *Epistle of James*, 720. There is usually not much argumentation, simply assertion.

² Allison, *Epistle of James*, 699.

³ Allison, *Epistle of James*, 699.

modern commentator argues that κύριος refers to Jesus in all references in 5:1-11.⁴ The following argument is that understanding the semantic coherence and logical flow of James 5:1-11, coupled with Jesus as the referent of the coming Lord in 5:7-8, makes it more likely that all the references to the “Lord” in 5:1-11 are to the Lord Jesus.

Boundaries and Coherence of James 5:1-11

There is some debate about the relationship between the discourse units of 4:11-5:11,⁵ but 5:1-11 is a coherent, self-contained section of the discourse.⁶ Distinct from 4:11-17, James 5:1-11 has an explicit eschatological topic: YHWH is coming to mete out eschatological judgment on the unjust rich, so the community of faith should maintain patience, endurance, and ethical behavior amongst themselves. James 5:1-6 serves as the basis for 5:7-11. James’s train of thought gets carried through seamlessly from the workers crying out to the Lord of Hosts to the Lord’s coming in judgment in response. The grounds for the fact that the Lord’s coming will be judgment for the rich who have withheld pay to their workers is that the Lord of hosts has heard the cries of the laborers. The Judge who stands at the door is the one to whom they cried. He is the one who is “very compassionate and merciful” (5:11). As a result, the unit derives its semantic coherence from that topic.⁷ The various explicit eschatological judgment references in

⁴ Hurtado seems to be a lone wolf in this regard, at least regarding James 5:7-11. Though, he is not a commentator proper (i.e. he has not written a commentary on the book of James). Hurtado, “Christology,” 173.

⁵ E.g. Johnson argues that 4:11-5:6 constitute a single unit because the constituent parts (4:11-12; 4:13-17; 5:1-6) all have the common theme of denouncing arrogant behavior. Johnson, *Letter of James*, 292. So 5:7-11 is part of a separate section than 5:1-6 that acts as a hinge to 5:12-20. Johnson, *Letter of James*, 311. Johnson may be correct, but one could still organize the text of 4:11-5:11 in a way that includes 5:7-11. For example, Laws sees 5:1-11 as a distinct unit. Laws, *Epistle of James*, 194-196.

⁶ Of course, it is related to what comes before it and after it.

⁷ George Hart and Helen Hart, *A Semantic and Structural Analysis of James* (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2001), 134.

5:1, 3, 5a, 7, 8, 9 strengthen the topical coherence.⁸ Additionally, the four occurrences of *iōoú* (5:4, 7, 9, 11) give the section stylistic coherence.⁹ So it is appropriate and necessary to consider James 5:1-11 as a unified section because of its consistent topic with semantic and stylistic coherence, but there are other indications to support this division.

The two main constituent parts to James 5:1-11 are 5:1-6 and 5:7-11. Surrounding 5:1-11 are James 4:13-17 and 5:12. James 4:13-17 is a self-contained unit that begins with *Ἄγε νῦν* (“come now”), marks the addressees (*οι λέγοντες...* (“those who say”)), then makes an inferential statement about ethics indicated by *οὖν*. Similarly, 5:1-11 begins with *Ἄγε νῦν* (“come now”; 5:1) and proceeds to an inferential statement indicated by *οὖν* (“therefore”; 5:7). So the interjection *Ἄγε νῦν* (“come now”) in 5:1 marks the transition to a new unit in the way that it marked the transition from 4:12 to 4:13. Verse 4:13 is in the third person singular (though 4:13-17 addresses “*οι λέγοντες...*” in the second person plural, too), while 5:1 moves to the second person plural in an address to *οι πλούσιοι* (“the rich”) throughout 5:1-6 until the transition in 5:7. In 5:7-11 James maintains the second person plural, but the addressees are the *ἀδελφοί* (“brothers”). The semantic and stylistic coherence of 5:1-11 point towards 5:1-6 as the basis for 5:7-11 rather than a larger section of the discourse.

Eschatology in James 5:1-11

The letter of James itself is an eschatologically framed “paraenetic letter of community instruction.”¹⁰ James situates the Christian community as an eschatological community

⁸ Hart and Hart, *A Semantic and Structural Analysis of James*, 134.

⁹ Hart and Hart, *A Semantic and Structural Analysis of James*, 134. This point is strengthened by the fact that *iōoú* only occurs in James in 3:4 and 3:5 outside 5:1-11. Hart and Hart, *A Semantic and Structural Analysis of James*, 134.

¹⁰ Penner, *Epistle of James and Eschatology*, 212. James 1:1 also situates the letter in eschatological terms, since the address to “the twelve tribes in the diaspora” (*ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ*) would

where eschatology and ethics meet. The content of 5:1-11 indicates that the section has particular relevance to James's eschatological vision, since along with James 1:2-12, itself eschatological paraenesis, it serves to bookend the main body of the letter in an eschatological paraenetic framework.¹¹ First, James uses three temporally expressed eschatological phrases in 5:1-6. He describes in 5:1 the reason that the rich should weep and wail is their yet realized judgment indicated by the phrase, "your coming miseries" (ταῖς ταλαιπωρίαις ὑμῶν ταῖς ἐπερχομέναις). In 5:3, by the phrase "in the last days" (ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις), James refers to the present eschatological situation.¹² In 5:5, the prophetic denunciation continues against the luxuriously self-indulgent and unjust rich who have ironically fattened themselves like cattle "in the day of slaughter" (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς). Second, in 5:7-11 James makes three more references to eschatology. He issues three exhortations to the community of faith.¹³ He grounds all three exhortations in the spatial-temporal nearness of "the Lord"/"the Judge." So:

5:7a (exhortation) Μακροθυμήσατε... (grounds) ἔως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου¹⁴
 5:7a (exhortation) Be patient... (grounds) until the coming of the Lord

5:8a (exhortation) στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, (grounds) ὅτι ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ἥγγικεν

5:8a (exhortation) Strengthen you hearts, (grounds) because the coming of the Lord is near

5:9 (exhortation) μὴ στενάζετε...κατ' ἄλληλον, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε. (grounds) οἶδον ὁ κριτὴς πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἔστηκεν

have invoked the theme of eschatological restoration, and "messiah" (χριστοῦ) would have strengthened the eschatological overtones. Matt Jackson-McCabe, "The Messiah Jesus in the Mythic World of James," *JBL* 122/4 (2003): 714-715. Again, paraenesis does not exclude the influence of other genres, e.g. prophetic.

¹¹ Penner, *Epistle of James and Eschatology*, 121-213.

¹² Laws, *Epistle of James*, 200-201.

¹³ It is evident that he speaks to Christians since he uses the familial term ἀδελφοί three times to address them in 5:7-11.

¹⁴ The clause ἔως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου functions as a temporal modifier to the main verb, but it also functions implicitly as the grounds for the patience, because the need for patience will end with the Lord's coming.

5:9 (exhortation) Do not complain...against one another, so that you might not be judged. (grounds) Behold! The Judge stands at the door

Therefore, the ethics of patience, endurance, and community wholeness/integrity in 5:7-11 is eschatological ethics grounded in the coming of the Lord.

Further contributing to the eschatological character of James 5:1-11 is the theme of YHWH as judge. In the OT, one finds people not infrequently referring to YHWH as a judge.¹⁵ The judge metaphor depicts YHWH as one who is “committed to a rule of just law, as one who can be counted on to intervene on behalf of those who are treated unjustly.”¹⁶ Thus, in Ps. 67:6 OG the psalmist refers to God as “father of the orphans and judge¹⁷ of the widows” (cf. Jas. 1:27). The psalm is similar to a statement that occurs in Deuteronomy 27:19, where YHWH curses those who do injustice to the orphan and the widow. As a whole the Psalter characterizes YHWH as preeminently just (e.g. Ps. 99:4), which forms the basis of Israel’s appeals to YHWH’s justice for “solace and assurance that exploitative social situations will be righted” (e.g. Pss. 7:7-9, 18; 82:2-4).¹⁸ A particularly relevant psalm in relation to James 5:1-11 is Psalm 96:10-13/95:10-13 OG. It combines YHWH’s justice and judgment with his coming:

Say among the nations, “The Lord (ὁ κύριος) became king! Indeed, he set right the world, which shall not be shaken. He will judge people with forthrightness.”

¹¹Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea shake, and all that fills it; ¹²let the plains exult, and everything in them. Then shall all the trees of the forest rejoice ¹³before the Lord (πρὸ προσώπου κυρίου), because he is coming to judge the earth (ὅτι ἔρχεται, ὅτι ἔρχεται κρῖναι τὴν γῆν). He will judge the world with righteousness and people with his truth (NETS).

¹⁵ E.g. 1 Sam. 24:16 OG; Pss. 7:12 OG; 49:6 OG; 67:6 OG mentions that God is the father of orphans and the “judge” of widows in his holy place; cf. Sir. 35:12; Ps. Sol. 2:18; 4:24; 9:2.

¹⁶ Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 234.

¹⁷ Gk: κρίτης; NETS “vindicator.”

¹⁸ Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 235.

James, then, taps into a theme familiar in Jewish literature: YHWH, who is the paragon of justice, will right the present injustice because he is coming to judge all people.¹⁹

In 5:7-8, James alludes to YHWH's eschatological theophanic coming to restore and heal Israel with an allusion to Greek Hosea (Hos. 5:15-6:3 OG). As noted earlier, Bauckham argues for this allusion.²⁰ But asserting the allusion requires some justification, because not all commentators see it. For example, Carson in his article on James in *The Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* does not note any allusion.²¹ Johnson does not mention whether he thinks James alludes to Hosea 6:3, so presumably he does not see an allusion.²² Ropes does not see any close resemblance to the OT.²³ He argues that πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον is not a “purely literary allusion” or “mere biblical allusion;” rather, he “uses a current phrase as if he were himself familiar with the matter [i.e. early and late rain] in question.”²⁴ Vlachos sees Deuteronomy 11:14 as the most likely backdrop for the allusion, because both Deuteronomy and James use it in the context of YHWH's faithfulness.²⁵ But, in addition to Bauckham, Laws see an allusion to Hosea 6:3.²⁶ She argues that the “biblicist” language of James 5:1-6 and James's use of OT exemplars beginning in 5:10 support the literary reference.²⁷

So let us examine the text to determine if James alludes to Hosea 6:3. James 5:7b reads:

¹⁹ One sees a similar theme in other early Jewish literature, too. See Appendix A.

²⁰ Bauckham, *James*, 138.

²¹ Carson, “James,” 1010-1011.

²² Johnson, *James*, 314-315.

²³ Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 296.

²⁴ Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 296.

²⁵ Vlachos, *James*, 171. He also notes the local climate as contributing to the image.

²⁶ Laws, *Epistle of James*, 212-123.

²⁷ Laws, *Epistle of James*, 212.

ἰδοὺ ὁ γεωργὸς ἐκδέχεται τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς μακροθυμῶν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ, ἕως λάβῃ πρόιμον καὶ ὕψιμον

Behold! The farmer awaits the valuable fruit of the earth by being patient about it, until it receives the early and late rain.

The phrase *πρόιμον καὶ ὕψιμον* (“early and late rain”) is the operative phrase for the potential allusion. It is a fairly rare phrase that occurs first in the LXX in Deuteronomy 11:14. It is located in the apodosis of the conditional sentence of Deut. 11:13-14:

¹³And if you listen to the report as much as all his commandments I am commanding you today – to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and all your life, ¹⁴then he will give rain to the earth for you during the time, the early rain and late rain, and you will bring in your wheat and your wine and your olive oil...

(¹⁴καὶ δώσει τὸν θέτον τῇ γῇ σου καθ’ ὅραν προιμον καὶ ὕψιμον καὶ εἰσοίσεις τὸν σῖτόν σου καὶ τὸν οἶνόν σου καὶ τὸ ἔλαιόν σου).

If Israel obeys, loves, and worships YHWH wholeheartedly, he will bring covenant blessing in the form of favorable agricultural conditions (i.e. life). On the contrary, if Israel worships other deities, he will bring the covenant curses that consist of no rain, famine, and death (Deut. 11:16-17; cf. Jer. 5:24). YHWH providing rain that brings agricultural plenty for Israel is a stock covenant blessing upon the condition of Israel’s faithful devotion to him (e.g. Lev. 26:3-4; Deut. 11:17; 28:11-12). Such a blessing was accompanied by YHWH being present among the Israelites (e.g. Lev. 26:12). The covenant blessing for obedience contrasts with the stock covenant curses for disobedience and idolatry, which include YHWH bringing agricultural ruin to Israel (e.g. Lev. 26:16, 20, 34; Deut. 28:22-24, 30, 38-40, 42, 48, 51b). Attached at the end of the covenant curses is also a promise that YHWH will remember his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and remain faithful to his covenant in spite of Israelite disobedience, so that the Israelites should return to YHWH and he will restore them to

positive relationship (e.g. Lev. 26:40-45; Deut. 30:1-10, which includes agricultural prosperity in Deut. 30:9).²⁸

Before moving on to Hosea's use of the theme of agricultural abundance (including προιμος καὶ ὄψιμος) conjoined with YHWH's coming theophanic presence, it is necessary to establish that James uses the Greek text of the Twelve Prophets. James did not formally quote from the Twelve, but he does allude to them significantly throughout his letter. He uses verbal/lexical correspondences to produce allusions to the Greek Twelve, and contains many themes drawn from them.²⁹ Analysis through "lexical clustering" shows that James has most significant resonances with Hosea and Malachi, the two bookends of the Twelve, and to Amos and Zechariah.³⁰ For example, James asks, "Who is wise and understanding among you?" (Jas. 3:13).³¹ The question echoes Hosea 14:10, where Hosea asks, "Who is wise (τίς σοφὸς) and will understand (καὶ συνίημι) these things, or prudent (συνετὸς) and will comprehend (ἐπιγινώσκειν) them?"

²⁸ One can hear resonances of Deuteronomy within James. James emphasizes that those who are loving God/the Lord (1:12; 2:5) will "receive the crown of life" (Ἀήμαρται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς; 1:12) and are "the heirs of the kingdom" (κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας; 2:5). It is possible that James, with his parallel statements in 1:12 and 2:5 is drawing from Deuteronomy 30. In the context of the covenant relation between YHWH and Israel in Deuteronomy, after the stipulations and the curses and blessings, YHWH says, "I have given before you today life (τὴν ζωὴν) and death [...]. Now if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, to love the Lord your God [...], then you shall live and become many, and the Lord your God will bless you in all the land into which you are entering there to inherit it (κληρονομήσαι αὐτήν)" (Deut. 30:15-16 NETS). James 1:12-15 has similarities to Deuteronomy 30. James contrasts loving God and life and the inheritance on the one side, and sin and death on the other side. There seem to be too many verbal and conceptual links to attribute the James text to coincidence rather than specific allusion ("life," "death," inheritance, kingdom (Deuteronomy is a suzerain-vassal treaty, so the concept of YHWH's kingdom/rule is present, even if βασιλεία is not used).

²⁹ Jobes, "The Greek Minor Prophets in James," 147-158. See also, Karen H. Jobes, "The Minor Prophets in James, 1 & 2 Peter and Jude," in *The Minor Prophets in the New Testament* (eds. Maarten J. J. Menken and Steve Moyise; New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 135-142.

³⁰ Jobes, "The Greek Minor Prophets in James," 157. Jobes orders the most significant linguistic clustering as Hosea, Zechariah, Amos, Malachi. The messages of Hosea and Malachi are most present. Other books of the Twelve are also relevant, but not as prominent, e.g. Micah. Jobes, "The Greek Minor Prophets in James," 157. See the chart on the lexical and thematic relations between the Greek Twelve Prophets and James in Jobes, "The Greek Minor Prophets in James," 151-152.

³¹ Τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν;

(NETS).³² Hosea, having laid bare Israel’s infidelity to YHWH, “challenges his audience to return to covenant obedience” (cf. σοφός and σύνεσις in Deut. 4:6).³³ So James, through his allusion to Hosea 14:10, draws from Hosea’s (and the Twelve’s as a whole) call to Israel to covenant obedience to YHWH, and calls for Christians to be faithful to their covenant God.³⁴ A second example comes from James 4:4, where James addresses the divided Christian community, those who have “friendship with the world,” with the feminine μοιχαλίδες (“adulteresses!”).³⁵ The context in James is about the divided person (δίψυχος 4:8; cf. 1:8) attempting to have friendship with God and the world at the same time, which echoes Greek Hosea 10:2.³⁶ In fact, the metaphor of “adulteresses” to refer to God’s covenant people violating the covenant in Hosea and Malachi forms a literary *inclusio* for the Greek Twelve.³⁷ So, “by invoking this allusion to the Greek Minor Prophets, James is warning that some of his Christian readers are in danger of the same kind of covenant unfaithfulness as condemned by the Twelve.”³⁸ The presence of the text of the Greek Twelve in James, especially Hosea, strengthens the case that he alludes to Hosea 6:3 specifically in James 5:7 rather than a general notion of blessing perhaps connected in some way to Deuteronomy 11:13-14. Given the heavy influence the Greek Twelve has on James, it would not be surprising if he deliberately draws from their eschatological vision.

³² Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 153.

³³ Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 153. Jobes sees James either alluding directly to Hosea 14:10, or Deuteronomy 4:6 as mediated by Hosea 14:10. Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 153.

³⁴ Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 153.

³⁵ Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 153.

³⁶ Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 154.

³⁷ Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 154-155.

³⁸ Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 155.

In the midst of Israel's covenant disobedience, the Twelve Prophets pick up the Deuteronomic post-covenant-curse promises in their eschatological pictures. In general, the Twelve share a roughly similar eschatological vision:³⁹ (1) YHWH/the prophet denounces the unjust, violent rich and powerful, (2) YHWH is bringing upon them judgment/Deuteronomic covenant curses, especially envisioned with agricultural ruin, (3) YHWH will restore a remnant of his people, envisioned with agricultural abundance, (4) the dual time of judgment and restoration occurs when YHWH's divine theophanic presence comes, often depicted as "the day of YHWH."⁴⁰

In Hosea, the fundamental denunciation YHWH brings against Israel is idolatry. It is depicted in terms of whoredom (e.g. Hos. 1:2; 3:1; 4:10-13; 5:4, 7; 7:4), disobedience to the law (e.g. Hos. 4:6-7), and injustice (Hos. 5:5; 9:7, 9; 10:9, 10, 13; 12:8). YHWH's absence is the result (Hos. 5:15). Judgment is coming upon Israel "on that day" (e.g. Hos. 1:4-5, 6; 2:2-14; 12:2; Hos. 4:5 OG: ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ). Exile is envisioned in agricultural ruin metaphors. YHWH says:

I will make her like a wilderness and render her as a parched land and kill her with thirst (Hos. 2:3 NETS).

Therefore I will return and carry off my grain in its time and my wine in its season (Hos. 2:9 NETS).

And I will annihilate her vine and her fig trees (Hos. 2:12 NETS).

³⁹ Of course, not all of the books of the Twelve share the same concern for eschatology. Also, those who envision an eschatological future (e.g. Malachi) do not simply repeat each other; rather, they likely draw on similar resources and live in similar situations that produce comparable eschatologies.

⁴⁰ The Twelve Prophets mention "the day of the Lord" with some regularity (Amos 5:18, 20; Joel 1:15; 2:1; 3:4; 4:14; Obad. 1:15; Zeph. 1:14; Mal. 3:19, 22 (cf. Isa. 13:6, 9; Jer. 32:33; Ezek. 7:10; 13:5)). Other important eschatological judgment (and/or restoration) phrases in the Twelve are "the last day(s)" or "that day." It is often accompanied with divine theophany language. E.g. Micah: Mic. 4:1-4, 6-7; 5:10; cf. Mic. 1:3. In this section the thesis focuses on Hosea, but for a wider analysis of the Twelve in relation to the four categories, see Appendix B.

Yet there is a strong theme of hope for restoration throughout Hosea (e.g. Hos. 1:7; 2:15-23; 6:11-7:1a; 11:11-12; 12:6, 9-10). YHWH's future act of restoration is going to be a New Exodus (Hos. 2:15; 12:9; ETC).⁴¹ Hosea envisions that YHWH's theophanic presence will come to heal Israel, metaphorically depicted as coming to his people "like the early and the latter rain to the earth" (Hos. 6:3 NETS). So Hosea envisions YHWH's eschatological divine presence with his people in terms of agricultural abundance. Most pertinent to James 5:7 is that all three occurrences of πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον in the Greek Twelve (Hos. 6:3; Joel 2:23; Zech. 14:10) occur in covenant blessing metaphors associated with YHWH's eschatological divine presence among his people.⁴²

In addition to the allusions above, there are a number of thematic and lexical resonances of Greek Hosea in James.

James	Word	Theme	Hosea
1:5	σοφός	Wise living	14:10
1:8; 4:8	δίψυχος	Divided mind	10:2
1:11	καύσων	Burning heat	12:2; 13:15
1:18	ἀλήθεια	Turn back to truth	4:1
1:26	γλῶσσα	Undisciplined tongue; remnant will not have deceitful tongue	7:16
1:26	μάταιος	Vain religion	5:11; 12:1
1:27	όρφαν*	Obligation to orphans	14:4
	χήρα	and widows; oppression of orphans	
2:6	καταδυνασευ*	Oppression	5:11? 12:8
2:11	μοιχ*	Adultery	2:4, 7; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4, 6
2:11	φον*	Murder	4:2; 6:9
2:13	ἔλεος καὶ κρισ*	Mercy and judgment	2:21; 6:6
3:13	σοφός	Call for wisdom	14:10
3:18	σπείρειν	Sow righteousness	10:12

⁴¹ Beale notes, "according to Hosea 11, the pattern of the first exodus at the beginning of Israel's history will be repeated again at the end of Israel's history, in the end time." G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 61.

⁴² For Joel and Zechariah, see Appendix B.

	δικαιοσύνη		
4:8	έγγίζω	Draw near to God	12:7
4:9	πένθ*	Misery of God's judgment	4:3
5:1	πλούτος*	Ill-gotten gain	12:9
5:3	χρυσός*	Gold as idolatrous	2:18; 8:4
5:3	ἔσχάται	Last days	3:5
	ἡμέραι		
5:6	δίκαιον	The righteous	12:7
5:7	πρόιμον καὶ	Early and latter rain	6:3
	ὄψιμον		
5:12	όμνυμι	Do not swear	4:15 ⁴³

So, (1) the judicious thematic parallels between Hosea (and the Twelve generally) and James, and (2) the numerous lexical correspondences between the Twelve (and Hosea especially) and James, strengthen the case that James deliberately alludes to Hosea 6:3 and the Twelve's eschatology in general with the phrase πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον in the context of the Lord's eschatological coming to judge and save in James 5:7. James parallels the eschatological coming of the Lord (ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου) with the presence of the early and latter rains (πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον) in 5:7. The exhortation to the community in 5:7a parallels the example with which James illustrates his instruction in 5:7b. The verb μακροθυμέω (to be patient) and temporal particle ἕως ("until") signal the parallel:

5:7a μακροθυμήσατε...ἕως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου
 5:7a Be patient...until the coming of the Lord

5:7b μακροθυμῶν...ἕως λάβῃ πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον
 5:7b by being patient...until it receives the early and late rain

Conceptually, the parallel is between the eschatological coming of the Lord to be present with his people, and the farmer waiting patiently until the early and late rains. The strong eschatological setting of 5:1-11 and James's use of the Greek Twelve Prophets,

⁴³ Chart modified from Jobes, "The Greek Minor Prophets in James," 150-151. Her chart spans the entire Twelve Prophets, but focuses on Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi, which are the most prevalent in James. To Jobes's list one might add ιάομαι from James 5:16 and Greek Hosea 6:1-2 and 7:1.

especially Hosea, make it highly probable that James alludes to Greek Hosea 6:3, which reads:

διώξομεν τοῦ γνῶναι τὸν κύριον, ὡς ὅρθρον ἔτοιμον εὐρήσομεν αὐτὸν, καὶ ἥξει ὡς ὑετὸς ἡμῖν πρόιμος καὶ ὄψιμος τῇ γῇ.

We will strive to know the Lord, we will find him ready as dawn, and he will come as rain to us – the early and late rain in the land.

Hosea 6:3 depicts YHWH's end-time presence as “the early and late rain in the land,” which is indicative of the divine post-curse covenant blessing of Deuteronomy 11:13-14. James alludes to the Hosea text specifically, but it is difficult to separate Hosea's eschatological vision from the rest of the Twelve, to whom James also frequently alludes (see Appendix B). It is possible, even probable given the Twelve's presence in James, that James alludes to Hosea 6:3 in a way that is representative of the similar eschatology of the various books of the Twelve. Part of the reason is that the peculiar phrase, πρόιμος καὶ ὄψιμος, is a relatively rare one that the Twelve appear to have appropriated from Deuteronomy 11:4 by combining it with post-Deuteronomic curse end-time presence of YHWH. So James receives Deuteronomy 11:14 through the mediation of the Twelve Prophets' eschatological vision. He appropriates the eschatology of the Twelve regarding YHWH's eschatological presence, specifically the image of YHWH's coming as “the early and later rain” from Hosea 6:3, to ground his ethical exhortation for his audience, the Christian community, to be patient. Now the question is, to whom does James refer in James 5:7-8 – God or the Lord Jesus?

Παρουσία κυρίου (“Coming of the Lord”) in Early Christian Writings

The most important indicator James uses regarding the identity of κύριος in James 5:7-8, is the phrase τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου (“the coming of the Lord”). The term παρουσία

κυρίου or similar phrases (e.g. “his coming”) in NT always refers to the Lord Jesus’s eschatological coming.⁴⁴ Paul’s Thessalonian correspondence provides the most illuminating parallel to James 5:7-8. Paul writes about the future eschatological coming/presence of the risen Lord Jesus. So, in 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, Paul describes how the Thessalonian “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who is delivering us from the coming wrath.” In 1 Thessalonians 2:19 he describes the eschatological event as “his [i.e. the Lord Jesus’s] coming (τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ). Later, Paul hopes that the risen Lord causes the Thessalonians “to increase and abound with love for one another and for everyone” with the aim to “establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father in the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones” (1 Thess. 3:12-13). Similar references occur in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 and 5:23. The most relevant instance in comparison to James 5: 7-8 is 1 Thessalonians 3:13. Like James, Paul utilizes the eschatological vision of the Twelve prophets when talking about the Parousia of the Lord. In 1 Thessalonians 3:13 Paul alludes to Zechariah 14:5, as is evident by the lexical correspondence and contextual similarities:

1 Thess. 3:13 ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ
μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἀγίων αὐτοῦ

in the coming of our Lord Jesus
with all his saints

Zech. 14:5 καὶ ἥξει κύριος ὁ θεός μου
καὶ ἄγιοι μετ’ αὐτοῦ

and the Lord my God will come

⁴⁴ Pauline παρουσία texts that explicitly refer to the risen Lord Jesus are 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; cf. Phil. 1:6; 3:20. Petrine texts: 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4. Johannine text: 1 John 2:23. Gospel texts: Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39.

and his saints with him⁴⁵

So where Greek Zechariah has “the Lord my God,” Paul has “our Lord Jesus.”⁴⁶ The instance of Paul’s Parousia language in this text is indicative of his theology generally; “the future coming of the *Lord* [i.e. YHWH] is always seen as the return of the present reigning Lord, Jesus Christ.”⁴⁷

Furthermore, the relationship between ethical exhortation and the *παρουσία* in 1 Thessalonians is similar to that in James. Like Paul, James grounds his exhortation to community behavior in the imminence of the Lord’s coming to judge.⁴⁸ Paul uses the Parousia, in its function as eschatological judgment, to reinforce “community-oriented social behavior required by Paul.”⁴⁹ Similarly, James is reinforcing “community-oriented social behavior” in James 5:7-11 by exhorting his audience with a number of imperatives for ethical behavior in the context of the Christian community (μακροθυμήσατε (“be patient”; 5:7, 8), στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν (“strengthen your hearts”; 5:8), μὴ στενάζατε κατ’ ἄλληλων (“do not complain against one another”; 5:9), ὑπόδειγμα λάβετε... (“take as an example”; 5:10)). Further strengthening the parallel between 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 and James 5:7-11 is that Paul and James use some of the exact same language within their community ethical concerns.⁵⁰ Therefore, not only is the

⁴⁵ Gordon D. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 43.

⁴⁶ The possessive pronouns ἡμῶν (1 Thess. 3:13) and μον (Zech. 14:5 OG) that modify κύριος strengthen the relational aspect of the coming of the Lord. It is not a distant deity of whom Zechariah and Paul have no personal knowledge; rather, it is their covenant deity whom they know.

⁴⁷ Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 43.

⁴⁸ Similarly, see 2 Peter 3.

⁴⁹ Charles A. Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 145.

⁵⁰ 1 Thess. 3:13 εἰς τό στηρίξαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας. James 5:8 στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν. In 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13, Paul hopes for the risen Lord to enable and empower the Thessalonians with the ethic of love and for him to “establish their hearts” in a manner fitting for the Parousia. James’s instruction is to the Christian community members themselves. Both aim to foster community whose hearts are

Parousia of the Lord in early Christianity in general a stock phrase to refer to the coming of the risen Lord Jesus, Paul uses it in a way very much like James in the context of community ethical instruction. As a result, the two occurrence of “the coming of the Lord” in James 5:7 and 5:8 refer to the coming of the Lord Jesus.⁵¹ If one then takes into consideration the previous analysis that James utilizes the eschatology of the Twelve, and specifically uses an allusion to Greek Hosea 6:3 about the eschatological divine presence/coming of YHWH (Gk: κύριος), the implication is that for James, the coming of YHWH/the Lord is the coming of the Lord Jesus. So the language that Israel’s prophets use to describe the hope and yearning for their covenant deity YHWH’s end-time presence and to call Israel in order to re-orient it to right behavior in relation to their covenant Lord, James uses to refer to the Lord Jesus’s end-time presence and to orient the Christian community to right behavior in relation to their covenant Lord – the Lord Jesus.⁵² If James in 5:7-8 can speak of and relate to the Lord Jesus in analogous terms as the prophets talked about and related to YHWH, what about the rest of the references to κύριος in James 5:1-11 – to whom do they refer?

James 5:1-11 and Christology

Now it is possible to analyze the Christology of James 5:1-11 as a whole in light of two proverbial “stakes in the ground;” (1) James 5:1-11 is a unified section of eschatological

established. Another lexical similarity exists that emphasizes the interpersonal/community orientation of the ethics. 1 Thess. 2:12 ἀλλήλους. James 5:9 ἀλλήλων.

⁵¹ Also relevant is Matthew 24:3 (cf. Mark 13:3; Luke 21:7). Jesus’s disciples ask him, while he is sitting on the Mount of Olives, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming (τῆς σῆς παρουσίας) and consummation of the age?” Jesus responds. Matt. 24:27, 37, 39. The text alludes to Zechariah 14:4, which reads, “And his feet will stand in that day on the Mount of Olives....”⁵¹ Interestingly, Matthew’s allusion to Zechariah 14 in connection to the Parousia of Jesus has resonances with James, who uses the Twelve Prophets’ eschatological visions regularly and specifically in 5:7-11.

⁵² That James speaks of Jesus in analogous terms to how the OT prophets spoke of YHWH does not mean James replaced YHWH with Jesus to the exclusion of God “the Father”; rather, he relates to both God the Father and the Lord Jesus in analogous ways that OT Israelites were to relate to their covenant deity YHWH.

paraenetic discourse that reveals YHWH's judgment against the unjust rich (5:1-6), and exhorts God's faithful people to act with patience and integrity in light of the Parousia and their Lord's character, and (2) James 5:7-8, in an allusion to YHWH's eschatological coming, refers to Jesus's Parousia where the Twelve/Hosea refer to YHWH's coming to restore his covenant people. James grounds the Christian's basic mode of human existence, or ethical orientation, on their relation to their Lord. So, James speaks of and relates to the Lord Jesus in ways Second Temple Jews only did of God. The preceding is already enough to argue that James has a divine Christology, but to stop here would be to shortchange the evidence.

James 5:1-11 explicitly refers to YHWH, or Israel's covenant deity, six times (5:4 κύριος σαβαὼθ; 5:7 ὁ κύριος; 5:8 ὁ κύριος; 5:9 ὁ κριτής; 5:10 κύριος; 5:11 ὁ κύριος). Interpreters tend to assume that 5:4, 10, and 11 refer to "God" (i.e. "the Father"), but there is usually little to no argumentation for it.⁵³ For example, Baker, as noted earlier, asserts confidently without argument that among other references, 5:4, 10, and 11 "most certainly refer to God."⁵⁴ The assumption is evident in other exegetes, as well.⁵⁵ But to consider the references in 5:4, 5:10, and 5:11 as automatically references to God rather than Jesus is neither obvious nor necessary. First, it has already been established that James applies an OT YHWH-text to Jesus in James 5:7. So it is not inconceivable that he is operating with the understanding that the Lord Jesus is Israel's Lord. Second, early Christian authors on occasion refer to Jesus as present and active in Israel's history.

⁵³ Though Hurtado thinks that κύριος in 5:7-11 is the Lord Jesus. Hurtado, "Christology," 173.

⁵⁴ Baker, "Christology," 53. See also his comment on 5:10 and 5:11, about which he states, "surely it is God." Baker, "Christology," 53.

⁵⁵ E.g. Vlachos does not even raise the question of whether 5:4 refers to Jesus or God, but assumes God. Vlachos, "James," 163, 170. In 5:10 and 5:11 he sides with the majority of commentators that κύριος refers to "God the Father." Vlachos, "James," 174-175.

There are two explicit examples. The first is when the author of Jude states, “I want to remind you, although you know all the things once-for-all, that Jesus, after delivering a people from the land of Egypt, later destroyed those who did not believe” (Jude 5).⁵⁶ Jude sees Jesus as the agent of the Exodus (cf. Deut. 6:21, etc) and of the destruction of unbelieving Israel (Num. 14).⁵⁷ The second instance is when Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:4, states, “For they [Israel] were drinking from the spiritual rock following them, and the rock was Christ.” Paul makes this comment in the midst of an argument in 1 Corinthians 8-10 that started by framing the issue in terms of expressing faith in God alone over against idolatry, after which he moves on the speak of faith in the risen Lord over against idolatry by drawing from the relation between Israel and YHWH in OT Pentateuchal narratives.⁵⁸ Both Paul and Jude use the Exodus to warn against apostasy in the Christian community, but they explicitly identify “Jesus” or “Christ” as the agent that delivered the Israelites. Early Christians sometimes saw Jesus acting in YHWH’s role in Israel’s history of salvation. Third, the earliest Christian authors in general regularly apply YHWH-texts to the risen Lord Jesus.⁵⁹ Fourth, early Christians included Jesus in the

⁵⁶ Jude 5 has a major textual variant at this point. The main concern here is whether the text reads Ἰησοῦς or κύριος. External and internal evidence supports Ἰησοῦς as the reading that best explains the rise of the others. Ἰησοῦς: A B 33 81 88 2344 1739^{txt} Or^{1739^{mg}}; κύριος: & Ψ 307 436 642 1175 1448 1611 Byz latt sy^h. Other readings are ὁ θεός (C² 5 442 1243 2492 vg^{mss} συ²⁰¹) and θεός χριστός (P72). Scribes, seeing the unusual placement of Ἰησοῦς as agent of the Exodus rather than κύριος or θεός, attempted to “correct” the text by changing it. Even if the original text is κύριος, the referent is still Jesus, since Jude 4 refers to him as τὸν μόνον δεσπότην καὶ κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν (“our only master and lord Jesus Christ”). For more, see the discussions in Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, 657-658) and Simon J. Gathercole (*The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 36-40).

⁵⁷ Gathercole, *Pre-existent Son*, 41. Jude also includes Jesus in the primeval history (Jude 6).

⁵⁸ Tilling, *PDC*, 75-104. In 1 Cor. 10:1-10, Paul draws on the Israel-YHWH relation in Exodus 32, Numbers 11, 21 and 25, Deuteronomy 1 (also cf. Psalm 105), then uses them to speak of “the relation between the risen Lord and believers in Corinth.” Tilling, *PDC*, 95-96.

⁵⁹ Bauckham lists some fifty texts where an OT source speaks about YHWH, but the NT author uses it to refer to the risen Lord Jesus. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 219-221. Perhaps the strongest and most sustained example of an early Christian author relating to Jesus in ways directly analogous to how Israel relates to YHWH in the OT is in 1 Corinthians 8-10. His entire argument purposely and specifically

Shema.⁶⁰ These four considerations should at least make commentators hesitate before assuming the “YHWH of hosts” and κύριος coupled with an OT reference automatically refers to God the Father.⁶¹

Having questioned the assumption that κύριος refers to God in James 5:4, 10, and 11, the question is whether or not it could plausibly refer to Jesus. The positive case for it comes from the logic of the discourse of James 5:1-11. It has already been concluded that Jesus is the referent in 5:7-8, and most commentators agree.⁶² The identification of Jesus as the κύριος of 5:7-8 is the only solid throughway to identifying the κύριος of 5:1-11 more generally. To repeat what was said above about the boundaries and coherence of James 5:1-11: James’s train of thought gets carried through seamlessly from the workers crying out to the Lord of Hosts to the Lord’s coming in judgment in response. The grounds for the fact that the Lord’s coming will be judgment for the rich who have withheld pay to their workers is that the Lord of hosts has heard the cries of the laborers. Like the prophetic discourse of the Twelve Prophets denouncing the unjust rich whom YHWH would judge, James denounces them too. And like the Twelve Prophets, James envisions consolation and hope (yet also warning in 5:9) for the Lord’s people in the eschatological divine presence (5:7-8). In no way does James indicate a shift in his referent for κύριος. Thus, it is more likely that all six references to κύριος in James 5:1-11 refer to the Lord Jesus rather than switching back and forth between God (5:4), Jesus

uses language and categories used in the OT to express the uniqueness of the one God in the YHWH-relation over against idolatry (e.g. Exod. 32:1-6, 27-28, 25; Num. 11, 21, 25; Deut. 1, 32), and then applies it to Christ’s relation to believers over against idolatry. See Tilling, *PDC*, 75-104.

⁶⁰ See, esp. Fletcher-Louis, *Christological Origins*, 32-59. See also, Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 26-30, 210-218.

⁶¹ The issue is even more difficult in James, where there is seemingly a great deal of ambiguity in how he uses κύριος.

⁶² E.g. Laws, *Epistle of James*, 208-209; Johnson, *Letter of James*, 322; Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 293. Allison’s view allows for a Christological reading and a non-Christological reading, depending on the audience. Allison, *Epistle of James*, 699.

(5:7-8, maybe 9), then back to God again (5:10-11, maybe 9). At least James does not give much by way of indication that he switched referents. If indeed 5:4, 10, and 11 are also references to Jesus, James talks about and relates to Jesus in a way analogous to the way the OT prophets speak about and relate to YHWH.

In 5:1-6, James, in prophetic mode, portrays unjustly treated workers crying out to “the Lord of Hosts” for justice. Oppressed workers crying out to YHWH for justice is fairly common OT phenomenon.⁶³ In this instance James’s language evokes the Israelite experience in Egypt (e.g. Exod. 3:7).⁶⁴ So James taps into the OT Exodus motif of YHWH’s oppressed people crying for justice and brings it into his own situation. James knows what happens when YHWH’s oppressed people cry out to him for justice and the Lord hears them: YHWH comes to save his people and judge their oppressors. But James takes up YHWH’s people’s cry for justice and talks about how the Lord Jesus is coming to remit justice (Jas. 5:7-8).

In 5:10, James mentions “the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.” Speech “in the name of the Lord” shows a prophet’s allegiance to Israel’s God. It is “biblical idiom for speaking as a prophet on behalf of Yahweh and with the authority of Yahweh” (e.g. 2 Kgs. 2:24), which indicated that one was a prophet of YHWH.⁶⁵ James probably saw his own letter of eschatological instruction as a sort of “speaking in the name of the Lord.” For instance, he identifies himself, like the Twelve prophets especially, as a “slave of God and Lord Jesus Christ” (Jas. 1:1).⁶⁶ As the prophets spoke

⁶³ See above, “Eschatology in James 5:1-11.”

⁶⁴ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 302.

⁶⁵ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 318.

⁶⁶ Jobes notes that in 1:1, “the author of James presents himself as standing in the prophetic line of ancient Israel” and the recipients of the letter would have understood it as such (cf. e.g. Amos 3:7; Zech. 1:6; Mal. 4:4). Jobes, “The Greek Minor Prophets in James,” 152. It is notable that the prophets were servants of “the

in the name of YHWH and were opposed by idolatrous opposition, the Christian community does baptism by invoking “the noble name” (Jas. 2:7) and gathers to heal community members “in the name of the Lord” (Jas. 5:14), while outsiders blaspheme that name (Jas. 2:7). James uses categories for the Christian community practices that took place in relation to the Lord Jesus in analogous ways that the OT prophets and Israel related to YHWH.⁶⁷ By mentioning the prophets “who spoke in the name of the Lord” in the OT, James solidifies “the community’s sense of being in the line of the true prophets who also suffered.”⁶⁸ And in the christological reading of 5:1-11, James uses the stock way of describing the character of the God of Israel as merciful and gracious to describe the character of the coming Lord Jesus (cf. e.g. Exod. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8).

Conclusion

Therefore, the same way Israel and its prophets related to YHWH, James relates to the risen Lord Jesus. James relates to the risen Lord in categories Jewish monotheists only related to YHWH, Israel’s God. He draws intentionally from the Greek Twelve’s (esp. Hosea’s) eschatological vision and hope that sees YHWH returning (and Israel restored to him) with the covenantal blessing of rain and abundant agricultural success. James uses the text in a way that depicts the risen Lord as YHWH coming in eschatological blessing for the community of faith but eschatological judgment for the rich oppressors. He uses stock OT language for Israel’s relation to YHWH and understands it in terms of the Christian community’s relation to the Lord Jesus (5:4, 9, 10, 11).

Lord God” (Gk: κύριος ὁ Θεός; e.g. Amos 3:7 OG), but James distributes it into “God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

⁶⁷ For the argument that 2:7 and 5:14 refer to the Lord Jesus, see “James’s relation to the risen Lord.”

⁶⁸ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 319.

CHAPTER 5

James's Relation to the risen Lord

The preceding analysis of James 5:1-11 calibrates our analytical categories for understanding James's Christology. It enables one to examine James's Christology more broadly to see if it maps on to how early Jews expressed their monotheism. The following section analyzes how James relates to and talks about the Lord Jesus in the categories of James "God-relation." What emerges is a relationship between James (and Christians) and the Lord Jesus that is analogous to how relationally-expressed monotheistic Jews related to their covenant Lord YHWH. As a result, the "Christ-relation" constitutes a truly divine Christology.

1. Various expressions of Christ-devotion

James opens his letter by designating himself as one who is "slave of God and Lord Jesus Christ" (θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ δοῦλος). The phrase is in apposition to Ἰάκωβος, and as such constitutes the author's self-identity. "God" and "Lord" have been distributed to two linked yet distinct figures.¹ James declares his status of δοῦλος with respect to both God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Chiastically his self-identification is seen in this way:²

A	Ἰάκωβος
B	θεοῦ
B'	κυρίου Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ
A'	δοῦλος

¹ It is grammatically possible that the phrase could translate, "Jesus Christ – God and Lord." But it is unlikely for a few reasons. First, in James uses the three-part onomastic construction κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός in 2:1. Second, James uses the term θεός independent of "Lord" throughout the letter. Third, wider Christian literature attests more frequently to figures "God" and "Lord Jesus Christ" as separate (though linked) figures.

² Vlachos, *James*, 10.

The fact that one can organize the phrase chiastically strengthens the associations between God and the Lord Jesus, so that James has the same basic relation and disposition to both.

Typical usage of δοῦλος refers either to (1) a slave proper³ or (2) a more metaphorical use to refer to “one who is solely committed to another,” and as such the δοῦλος is in total allegiance to the other.⁴ Within this second usage, while occasionally used in a negative sense, δοῦλος is often used in a positive sense sometimes regarding a socially superior human but especially with reference to subservient relationship to a deity.⁵ This latter usage is present in Greek and Hebrew/Jewish literature.⁶ The OT is replete with language describing service to YHWH in terms of a slave-lord/suzerain-vassal relationship.

In the Old Testament the suzerain-vassal relationship is a standard metaphorical relation between YHWH and Israel or individual Israelites/Jews. The origin and basis for Israel’s slave relation to YHWH is probably associated with the suzerain-vassal relationship common in second millennium suzerain-vassal international treaties in southwestern Asia and Egypt. The political and relational rhetoric depicted the vassal-king as the slave/servant and the suzerain-king as his master/lord.⁷ Total submission was the posture that the vassal had in the relationship. Thus, one of the most apt visuals is the

³ “δοῦλος,” *BDAG*, 260; “δοῦλος,” *LSJ*, 447.

⁴ “δοῦλος,” *BDAG*, 260.

⁵ “δοῦλος,” *BDAG*, 260.

⁶ “δοῦλος,” *BDAG*, 260. Examples from Greek literature: Euripides, *Ion* 309 reads, τοῦ θεοῦ καλούμαι δουλος είμι τε; Cassius Dio *Rom. Hist.* 63.5.2. Inscriptions also evidence this (“δοῦλος,” *BDAG*, 260).

⁷ For example, the treaty between the suzerain Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and vassal Niqmaddu II of Ugarit (c.1350 BC) reads, “Niqmaddu, king of the land of Ugarit turned to Suppiluliuma, Great King, writing: “May Your Majesty, Great King, my lord, save me from the hand of my enemy! I am the subject of Your Majesty, Great King, my lord. To my lord’s enemy I am hostile, [and] with my lord’s friend I am at peace.” Gary Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts* (2nd Ed.; Ed. Harry A. Hoffner Jr.; SBLWAW; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 34-35.

vassal prostrating in front of the suzerain's feet.⁸ The OT, situated in its ANE context, depicts YHWH in covenant with various figures and groups.⁹ YHWH's relationship with Israel in the OT is a covenantal suzerain-vassal relationship. It is specifically in the covenantal relation that Israelites and Israel are termed "slaves." For example, David is δοῦλος in relation to κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ,¹⁰ as is Solomon,¹¹ Israel,¹² Moses,¹³ Elijah,¹⁴ YHWH's prophets,¹⁵ and Jonah.¹⁶ In contrast to being slaves to YHWH-κύριος is being slaves to other deities.¹⁷ When Josiah made reforms, the Chronicler says that Israel "served as a slave the Lord their God" (τοῦ δουλεύειν κυρίῳ θεῷ αὐτῶν; 2 Chron. 34:33). Early Jewish literature continued to use the slave metaphor in their relation to YHWH.

⁸ So, within the Amarna Letters there are correspondences to the suzerain Pharaoh in Egypt that exemplify the vassal's posture toward the suzerain as one of total submission. Rib-Hadda (ruler of Gubla) writes to the Pharaoh, "Rib-Hadda says to his lord, king of all countries, Great King, King of Battle: May the Lady of Gubla grant power to the king, my lord. I fall at the feet of my lord, my Sun, 7 times and 7 times. [...] May my lord heed the words of his servant" (cf. Psa. 110:1). Michael D. Coogan, *A Reader of Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Sources for the Study of the Old Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 117.

⁹ E.g. Noah in Gen. 9:1-17; Abram/Abraham in Gen. 15:1-21 and 17:1-27; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Exod. 2:24; Israel in Exod. 20:2-17.

¹⁰ E.g. Deut. 32:36; 1 Sam./1 Kgdms. 23:10-11; cf. e.g. 2 Sam./2 Kgdms. 7:26-28; 1 Kgs/3Rgs. 8:24, 25, 66. Other words for "slave" are used for the slave-YHWH relation. Israelites are also called YHWH's οἰκέται in the context of YHWH bringing his people out of Egypt (Lev. 25:42). Moses is called YHWH's οἰκέτης (Deut. 34:5) and θεράπων (Exod. 14:31; Num. 11:11; 12:7-8; Deut. 3:24). Israel is also called YHWH's θεράπων (Gen. 50:17; Lev. 25:42). In the Greek Pentateuch all these terms are roughly synonymous. Benjamin G. Wright III, "'Ebed/Doulos': Terms and Social Status in the Meeting of Hebrew Biblical and Hellenistic Roman Culture," *Semeia* (1998): 91-93. The various Greek translations of the different Hebrew books' use of תָּבָע differs. Judges, 1-4 Kingdoms, and the later books (Minor prophets, Ecclesiastes, Psalms) usually render תָּבָע with either παῖς or δοῦλος. Job prefers θεράπων, and Proverbs οἰκέτης. Ben Sira only uses οἰκέτης. Wright III, "'Ebed/Doulos,'" 95-96.

¹¹ E.g. 1 Kgs./3 Kgdms. 8:23, 28, 29, 30.

¹² E.g. 1 Kgs./3 Kgdms. 8:36; Ezra 5:11.

¹³ E.g. 1 Kgs./3 Kgdms. 8:56; 18:12; Ps. 104:26 OG; Mic. 3:24 OG.

¹⁴ E.g. 1 Kgs./3 Kgdms. 20:28.

¹⁵ E.g. 2 Kgs./4 Kgdms. 21:10; Ezra 9:11; Amos 3:7; Zech. 1:6.

¹⁶ Jon. 1:9 OG. Potentially relevant for James is Zephaniah 3:9 OG. In it are the themes of eschatological salvation, pure speech, calling on the name of the Lord, and serving him.

¹⁷ E.g. Deut. 28:64; 1 Kgs./3 Kgdms. 9:6. Also, "slaves of Baal" is contrasted with the "slaves of the Lord" in 2 Kgs./4 Kgdms. 10:22-23.

Philo views being a slave of God positively.¹⁸ OT Pseudepigraphal and Apocryphal books also use the “slave of God” metaphor.¹⁹ For Jews, there was a continuous tradition of self-understanding as being the “slaves” of their covenant Lord. Early Christians employed the Lord-slave relational rhetoric in continuity with the OT and subsequent Jewish literature, but they understood themselves as slaves of God and the risen Lord Jesus. So Paul identified himself a slave of Christ, and he considered his coworkers and Christians in general as also taking the role of slaves of Christ.²⁰ Being a slave of Christ and God was in contrast to being slave to sin.²¹ The authors of 2 Peter and Jude also identified as slaves of Christ (2 Pet. 1:1; Jude 1). Throughout the earliest Christian letters and literature, “to give a slave’s service to Christ is indistinguishable from giving such service to God.”²²

For the “slave of God/Lord” metaphor James draws on the scriptural tradition like other Second Temple Jews, and includes the Lord Jesus as other early Christians did. By employing specific slave of God/Lord metaphor, James understands himself in relation to God and to the risen Lord in a way only analogous to the way the OT and early Jewish writers portrays Israel’s/Israelites subservient relation to YHWH God. The OT uses the phrase “the Lord your/our God” to refer to Israel’s covenant deity.²³ Even if one limits

¹⁸ Wright III, “*Ebed/Doulos*,” 104-105. E.g. *Det. 56; Mut. 46; Her. 6*. Josephus also uses the slave of God metaphor. See e.g. A.J. 5:39; 11:90, 101.

¹⁹ Wright III, “*Ebed/Doulos*,” 106. The main terms used are παῖς and δοῦλος.

²⁰ Paul: Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Phil. 1:1. Coworkers: Timothy (Phil. 1:1), Epaphras (Col. 4:12). Believers in general (1 Cor. 7:22).

²¹ Rom. 6:6, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22; 12:11; 16:18.

²² Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ* (NSBT 8; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 134.

²³ E.g. Greek Hosea 12:10 and 13:4 YHWH’s self identification is in his relation to Israel in terms of the stock covenantal prologue and the future new Exodus hope based on that covenant relationship. So, 12:10 reads “I the Lord, your God, brought you up from the land of Egypt; I will make you live in tents again, as the day of the feast” (Hos. 12:9 NETS).

one's scope to Leviticus 19 and the Twelve, James would have been well aware of the constant conjunction of κύριος and ὁ θεός to refer to Israel's covenant deity in the stock formula κύριος ὁ θεός.²⁴ So when James opens by calling himself a "slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ," he combines the Scriptural motif of YHWH's faithful people being called slaves to their deity (especially prophets), and the covenant name of their deity (κύριος ὁ θεός). He takes up both motifs to understand and communicate his relation to both God and the Lord Jesus.²⁵

James 2:1 is a text about which scholarly literature has produced a variety of interpretations on a number of issues. One of the main issues is the question about whether the construction ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ refers to people having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e. he is the object of the faith,²⁶ or if it refers to the faith Jesus had in God, exemplified during his life, and is in his teaching, i.e. he is the subject that has the faith (in God).²⁷ The former would evidence explicit

²⁴ If one limits one's scope to just Greek Leviticus 19 and the Greek Twelve Prophets, two texts with which James is familiar, the phrase κύριος ὁ θεός ἡμῶν/ἡμῶν (or singular σου/μου) occurs 25 times: Lev. 19:2, 3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 23, 25, 28, 31, 34, 36, 37; Hos. 2:25; 12:10; 13:4; Mic. 4:10; 7:10; Joel 2:27; 4:17; Zeph. 3:17; Zech. 13:9; 14:5; Mal. 3:6. Other forms of κύριος ὁ θεός also occur in the Old Greek of the Twelve Prophets: Hos. 12:6; Amos 3:7, 8, 11, 13; 4:3, 5, 13; 5:8, 14, 15, 16, 27; 8:9; 9:5, 6, 12, 15; Joel 2:12; Obad. 1:1; Jon. 4:6; Nah. 3:5; Hab. 3:19; Zeph. 2:7; Hag. 1:12; Zech. 10:3, 6; Mal. 2:16.

²⁵ The fact that he also describes the Lord Jesus as "Messiah" (χριστός) does not negate the implications of the analogy, as if James is a "slave" to God, but also to God's eschatological agent in a sense that designates inferiority to God. It is possible (probable?) that James, like other early Christian writers (e.g. Paul) interpreted the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-9) in a way that sees "God"/θεός as "God the Father"/"God" and "YHWH"/κύριος as the Lord Jesus. See especially 1 Cor. 8:4-6. For analysis that Paul includes Jesus in the *Shema* as "Lord" in 1 Cor. 8:6, see Fletcher-Louis, *Christological Origins*, 39-49; Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 27-30, 210-218; Brian S. Rosner and Roy E. Ciampa, "1 Corinthians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 717-718. Contra James McGrath, who does not think Paul includes Jesus in the *Shema* in 1 Cor. 8:6; rather, he argues Paul places Jesus alongside (and outside) the *Shema*. McGrath, *The Only True God*, 38-42.

²⁶ Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 187; Laws, *Epistle of James*, 93-94; Wally V. Cirafesi, "ἔχετε πίστιν in Hellenistic Greek and its Contribution to the πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate," *BAGL* 1 (2012): 5-37; Mariam J. Kamell, "The Soteriology of James in Light of Earlier Jewish Wisdom Literature and the Gospel of Matthew," (PhD diss. University of St. Andrews, 2010), 152. Johnson lists three more who take the objective genitive view: Chaine, Marty, and Cantinat. See Johnson, *Letter of James*, 220.

²⁷ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 220.

devotion to the risen Lord, and the latter would indicate a more implicit devotion to Jesus through his teaching and exemplary life. Johnson argues for the subjective interpretation. He supports his assertion with two exegetical considerations: (1) the overall Christology of James does not lend to the objective genitive, since in James 2:19 and 23 faith's object is God; (2) James uses Jesus's sayings in a way that "suggests a meaning like 'the faith of Jesus in God as reflected in his teaching,' or perhaps 'the faith that is from Jesus Christ,' in the sense 'declared by Jesus.'"²⁸ Both of these reasons make a certain sense, but still presume what they need to demonstrate. It is true that James associates *πίστις* with God in James 2:19 and 23, but this does not make 2:1 any clearer, especially since they are different linguistic constructions. Verse 2:19 reads, *σὺ πιστεύεις ὅτι εἷς ἐστιν ὁ θεός* ("you believe that God is one"). Verse 2:23, a quote from Greek Genesis 15:6, reads, *ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Αβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ* ("Abraham believed God"). The former construction is *πιστεύειν* + *ὅτι* content clause, and the latter is *πιστεύειν* + dative. Neither 2:19 or 2:23 are *ἔχειν πίστιν* + genitive modifier, or even simply *ἔχειν πίστιν*, which has a different linguistic function (see below). Overall, while it is grammatically possible that *τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ* is subjective (or the like) and wider exegetical considerations might support it in a minimal sense, the case is not particularly strong. On the contrary, linguistics offers a more fruitful and decisive exegetical conclusion.

The phrase *ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ* refers to faith with "our Lord Jesus Christ" as the object. Cirafesi demonstrates three points using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL): "(1) that *ἔχειν πίστιν* is a nominalized ideational"²⁹

²⁸ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 220.

²⁹ The term "ideational" here refers to "the use of language for the purpose of understanding the environment of one's human experience." As such, "verbs are the primary carrier of ideational meaning" in Greek and English. Cirafesi, "ἔχειν πίστιν," 9.

metaphor³⁰ that is semantically related to its congruent paradigmatic variant *πιστεύειν*, and (2) that *ἔχειν πίστιν* disambiguates the function of a genitive modifier as the object of its head term,” and (3) “while the expressions *ἔχειν πίστιν* and *πιστεύειν* are semantically related, the difference between them is primarily a functional one.”³¹ In Hellenistic Greek, the construction *ἔχειν πίστιν* functions as an ideational metaphor that denotes “the mental process “believe”” in the nominalized phrase “having belief (or faith or confidence).”³² Some examples include: Plutarch, *Praec Ger Reipub* 812.F.6 (*πίστιν ἔχων*); Polybius, *Hist.* 32.6.5 (*ἔχων πίστιν*); Diog. Laert., *Vit. Phil.* 1.78.6 (*ἔχειν πίστιν*); Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carmina Moralia* 913.13 (*πίστιν ᔁχειν*); Nonnus, *Par Sancti Ev. Joannei* 1:206 (*πίστιν ᔁχεις*).³³ Further, there are a number of examples of *ἔχειν πίστιν* + genitive modifier that support this (e.g. Josephus, *A.J.* 19.16.1 (*ἔχει πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ*); Hermas, *Pastor* 43.9.2 (*τῶν ἔχοντων πίστιν θείου πνευματος*); Plutarch, *Fab. Max.* 5.5.1 (*τῷ [...] πίστιν ἔχοντι τοῦ σθμφέροντος*); Athanasius, *De Incarnatione Verbi* 29.4.15 (*τῶν αὐτοῦ τὴν πίστιν ἔχόντων*); Epiphanius, *Panarion* 3.351.7 (*τὴν πίστιν ἔχόντων τῆς ἀληθείας*); *Vitai Nicolai Sionitae* (*ἔχετε πίστιν θεοῦ*)).³⁴ In the above, the genitive in the *ἔχειν πίστιν* + genitive modifier construction specifies the object of the head noun

³⁰ Cirafesi notes, “*metaphor* occurs when a [semantic] choice is realized in a non-typical manner.” He gives the examples of someone choosing to express a process, usually expressed with a verb, with a noun. E.g. “His decision to go...,” instead of “He decided to go....” In this case, the verb “he decided” gets nominalized to “his decision.” Cirafesi, “*ἔχειν πίστιν*,” 10-11. It is a metaphor because the typical verbal phrase that describes a process is construed as a noun. Also, “ideational metaphor” is a category applicable to Hellenistic Greek. Cirafesi, Cirafesi, “*ἔχειν πίστιν*,” 14, 15-20.

³¹ Cirafesi, “*ἔχειν πίστιν*,” 5-6.

³² Cirafesi, “*ἔχειν πίστιν*,” 18.

³³ Cirafesi, “*ἔχειν πίστιν*,” 15-16. The New Testament contains *ἔχειν πίστιν* without a genitive modifier eleven times. Matt. 17:20; 21:21 (*έαν ἔχητε πιστιν*); Mk 4:40 (*ἔχετε πιστιν*); Luk. 17:6 (*εἰ εχετε πιστιν*); Acts 14:9 (*ἔχει πιστιν του σωθηναι*); Rom. 14:22 (*συ πιστι ήν ᔁχεις*); 1 Cor. 13:2 (*έαν ἔχω πασαν την πιστιν*); 1 Tim. 1:19 (*ἔχων πιστιν*); Jas. 2:14 (*έαν πιστιν λεγη τις ᔁχειν*), 18 (*συ πιστιν ᔁχεις*); Phlm 5 (*πιστιν ήν ᔁχεις*).

³⁴ Cirafesi, “*ἔχειν πίστιν*,” 16-20.

(πίστιν).³⁵ The same semantic dynamic is at work in the *ἔχειν πίστιν* + genitive modifier construction in James 2:1, so that “our Lord Jesus Christ” is the object of the head term “faith.”³⁶ The presence of the article (τὸν) before *πίστιν* specifies that he is commanding his audience to have a certain type of faith, with the genitive supplying the object.³⁷ A possible analogy is that *πίστιν* is the genus, the article indicates that James is talking about a specific subset within the genus, i.e. a particular specie, and the genitive modifier clarifies the specific specie, i.e. the faith that has “our Lord Jesus Christ” as its object. Instead of countering against the objective genitive view, James 2:23 uses different syntax to achieve similar meaning. Faith in the Lord Jesus in 2:1 is parallel to faith in God in 2:23. It is a “working” faith in that one cannot, in good faith, have faith in the Lord Jesus and simultaneously show partiality within the community of faith (Jas. 2:1-13).

Another important feature of James 2:1 that indicates devotion to the risen Lord is the possessive pronoun *ἡμῶν*. James identifies Jesus, the Messiah and Lord (cf. 1:1), as “our Lord Jesus Christ.” Their allegiance and ethical obligation is (ideally/imperatively) to the Lord of their community. James does not just use *κύριος* as an abstract title that delineates certain properties of ownership or superiority to the referent (Jesus) in general; rather, he refers to the risen Lord with reference to his relation to the community of faith. Yes, he is “the Lord,” but he is more importantly “our Lord.” James’s language is analogous to how the OT describes the relationship between Israel and YHWH (see above). YHWH is not just “the God” or “the Lord,” he is Israel’s God, “the Lord our

³⁵ Cirafesi, “ἔχειν πίστιν,” 20-22.

³⁶ Cirafesi, “ἔχειν πίστιν,” 26. The *ἔχειν πίστιν* constructions within James itself (2:14, 18) are metaphors congruent to *πιστεύειν* in 2:19 and 2:23. So, in 2:1, “two things have happened: (1) the nominalization has disambiguated the function of the genitive modifier in its co-text, and (2) the genitive modifier itself has specified the realm in which *πίστιν* operates.” Cirafesi, “ἔχειν πίστιν,” 26.

³⁷ Cirafesi, “ἔχειν πίστιν,” 27.

God" (e.g. Deut. 1:6; 6:4), "the Lord your God" (e.g. Exod. 6:7; 20:2). For James, Jesus is "our Lord" in the way YHWH was "the Lord our God" for Israel in the OT.

Strengthening the case is that in the very texts to which James refers and alludes, there are numerous examples to Israel's covenant allegiance and obligation to YHWH with the phrase "YHWH/the Lord your/our God."³⁸ James uses texts that speak of the YHWH/κύριος-Israel covenant relation in terms of the stipulations of the covenant that Israel must obey. But, when he appropriates the texts for his audience, he speaks of the risen Lord Jesus as the Lord of the community against whom violating the Levitical love command is incompatible. So, as allegiance to YHWH is incompatible with partiality through favoritism to the rich and neglect of the poor and socially disadvantaged (Lev. 19:9-10, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, 32, 33-34), so is allegiance to the Lord Jesus incompatible with partiality.³⁹

In James 2:7, James mentions "the rich" (οἱ πλούσιοι; 2:6) and asks a rhetorical question, "Don't they blaspheme the noble name called upon you?" (2:7). There is a negative action against "the noble name" and positive action using it within the community of faith. The most likely referent for "the noble name that was called upon you" (τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς) is the risen Jesus.⁴⁰ The evidence is

³⁸ Lev. 19:2, 3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 23, 25, 28, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37; Exod. 20:2, 5, 10, 12; Deut. 5:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 (x2), 24, 25, 27 (x2), 32, 33.

³⁹ The difficult to understand phrase τῆς δόξης could be there to allude to the situation of Israel regarding the two main texts James alludes to (Lev. 19 and the Decalogue [Exod. 20 or Deut. 5]) where YHWH's theophanic glory came upon a mountain (Exod. 24:16-17; Deut. 5:24).

⁴⁰ Phrases involving "the name of God" are much less frequent than references to "the name" of Jesus/Lord/Christ. Two of the three occurrences of "the name of God" involve blasphemy against it, so one might conclude that God is the more likely reference than Jesus in James. Romans 2:24, in an OT direct quotation, states, τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ...βλασφημεῖται. Also, Revelation 16:9 reads, ἐβλασφήμησαν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ.... One can perhaps explain the rarity of using "the name of God" in contrast to the programmatic way early Christians used "the name of the Lord Jesus" and other similar phrases due to the circumstances of the usage. Roman 2:24 is a direct OT quotation from Isa. 52:5, whereas James and the

pervasive in the earliest Christian sources that Christians on the one hand represented some opposition as negative acts against “the name of the Lord Jesus” (and similar phrases), and on the other associated various positive acts within the Christian communities associated with it. In Acts, the author describes how the incipient Jerusalem community connected “calling on the name of the Lord” with salvation (Acts 2:21; cf. Joel 2:32/3:5 OG). The early church in Acts performed the initiatory rite of baptism into “the name of the Lord Jesus/Jesus Christ” (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5), preached “in the name of Jesus/the Lord” (Acts 8:12; 9:27, 28), healed people and exorcised in his name (Acts 3:6; 4:10; 16:18). Paul declared that he was ready to be bound and to die for the sake of “the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 21:13). Acts describes other groups trying to stop the early Christians speaking or teaching “in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:18; 5:40; cf. Acts 26:9). Some outsiders even apparently tried to co-opt “the name of the Lord Jesus” in order to perform exorcisms (Acts 19:13). Upon their failure, the author states that, “the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled” (Acts 19:17). Paul also uses “the name of the Lord” or similar phrases with reference to the risen Lord Jesus in connection to devotional activities: invoking his name (Rom. 10:13; cf. Joel 2:32/3:5 OG), assembling in his name (1 Cor. 5:4), doing everything (“word or deed”) in his name (Col. 3:17), prostrating in his name (Phil. 2:10), and baptizing in his name (1 Cor. 1:13). First Peter speaks about potential insult leveled against Christians that “believe in the Christ” (1 Pet. 4:14). So in James there is evidence for community actions that involved invoking the name of the Lord Jesus over the Christian.

“name of the Lord” instances usually refer to community practices. It is also possible that James refers to “the noble name” in a way that includes both God “the Father” and the risen Lord as the referent.

In James 5:14-15, there is a similar practice of invoking “the name of the Lord.”⁴¹ In 5:14, James instructs the Christian community that if there is someone who is sick, that person “should call the elders of the assembly and they should pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (ἐν τῷ ὄνόματι τοῦ κυρίου). The practice of anointing with oil in preparation for prayer for the sick is a community act to call upon the Lord’s providential care for his people. Invoking “the name of the Lord” is frequent in the OT.⁴² It is in the tradition of invoking YHWH that the early Christians, James included, invoked the Lord Jesus. Turning to the specific act in James 5:14 itself, the OT Scriptures associate anointing with “a cluster of religious significations from which to draw when prescribing anointing with oil for the sick.”⁴³ The significations include sanctification, God’s providential care and favor (e.g. Ps. 45:7 OG), and atonement (Lev. 14:18, 29).⁴⁴ So James uses categories the OT uses for YHWH’s/the Lord’s name and the associations that come with it in the context of community healing to describe how the Christian community relates to the risen Lord by invoking his name and calling for his providential care.

2. *What James contrasts with Christ-devotion*

⁴¹ Again, this is understood as the name of the Lord Jesus, due to widespread early Christian usage.

⁴² In James, “the name of the Lord” is called upon Christians in 2:7 (τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς), and used in anointing a sick person in 5:14 (ἀλειφαντες αὐτὸν ἔλαιῳ ἐν τῷ ὄνόματι τοῦ κυρίου). The Greek OT evidences many expressions and contexts for invoking “the name of the Lord.” Prominent among them is the combination of ἐπικαλέω + το ὄνομα κυρίου. See Gen. 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25; Deut. 28:10; 3 Kgdms. 18:24; 4 Kgdms. 5:11; 1 Chron. 13:6; Pss. 114:4 OG; 115:4 OG; Joel 3:5; Zeph. 3:9. Cf. Gen. 16:13; Exod. 24:5; Deut. 32:3. Community cultic devotional acts were also done “in the name of the Lord.” See Deut 18:5, 7; 21:5; 2 Kgdms. 6:18; 1 Chron. 16:2; Ps. 128:8 OG. Cf. Pss. Sol. 15:1. Cf. 4Q381 24.7 “your name is my salvation” addressed to YHWH God.

⁴³ James Riley Strange, *The Moral World of James: Setting The Epistle in its Greco-Roman and Judaic Environments* (SBL vol. 136; New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 35.

⁴⁴ Strange, *The Moral World of James*, 34-35. Examples of anointing associated with sanctification include Deut. 28:40; Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2; 2 Chron. 28:15; Ezek. 16:9; Dan. 10:3; Matt. 6:17. Strange, *The Moral World of James*, 46n62.

Alongside the two instances of devotion to the Lord Jesus in James 2:1-13 are two instances of what James contrasts with Christ-devotion: partiality (contra faith in the Lord Jesus) and blasphemy (contra the noble name called upon them). First, allegiance to the Lord of the community is incompatible with honoring the rich while shaming the poor (2:1-3). If one shows partiality, then that one violates the royal law exemplified in the law of love and the Decalogue (2:8-11).⁴⁵ So, as noted above, James contrasts allegiance to the Lord Jesus with favoritism for the rich and neglect of the poor and socially disadvantaged in a way that is analogous to Israel's allegiance to its covenant deity being incompatible with such actions.⁴⁶ In 2:14-26 James makes the point that “‘believing’ void of ‘doing’” is a false and duplicitous faith that is inconsistent with faith whose object is the community's Lord – the Lord Jesus.⁴⁷ Second, James notes that the rich “blaspheme the noble name (τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα) called upon you” (2:7). The word βλασφημέω is typically used as a verb with the sense of speaking in a denigrating, demeaning, or maligning way.⁴⁸ Against Israel's Lord, blasphemy is a serious offense. Greek Leviticus 24:15b-16 states that Israel should stone to death one who blasphemes Israel's covenant God: “If a person, a person should curse God (καταράσῃ τι θεόν), he shall assume guilt. Whoever names the name of the Lord (όνομάζων δὲ τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου) – by death let him be put to death” (NETS). Similar covenant stipulations against slandering Israel's deity

⁴⁵ Johnson notes, “keeping the law of love involves observing the commandments explicated by the Decalogue (2:11) and Lev 19:12-18 in their entirety. Luke Timothy Johnson, “The Use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James,” *JBL* 101/3 (1982): 400.

⁴⁶ If the νόμος βασιλικός is the kingdom law that Jesus pronounced during his ministry, then it strengthens the analogous relation between YHWH and the Lord Jesus. The Jesus-YHWH analogy is closer to the Jesus-Moses one in James 2, because Jesus is seen as the community's Lord (2:1; cf. 1:1). The two are not mutually exclusive, though. For understanding the “royal law” as the law of Jesus/the kingdom, see Johnson, “The Use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James,” 401; Virgil V. Porter Jr. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 162 (October-December 2005): 474.

⁴⁷ Cirafesi, “ἔχειν πίστιν,” 28.

⁴⁸ “βλασφημέω,” *BDAG*, 178.

are in Exod. 20:7 and Deut. 5:11.⁴⁹ They both state, “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (οὐ λήμψῃ τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἐπὶ ματαίῳ). For the Lord will never acquit the one who takes his name in vain” (NETS).⁵⁰ The scriptural tradition is univocal: blasphemy against Israel’s Lord is an intolerable covenant violation. Proper speech about the Lord involves something like blessing or invoking him for help.⁵¹ In James 2:7, the act of blasphemy is directed toward the community’s Lord (Jesus), characterized as “the noble name,” whose name is invoked upon his people.⁵² Blaspheming the name provides a stark contrast with acceptable speech concerning the Lord. Given James’s special concern for speech ethics throughout his whole letter (esp. Jas. 3:1-12), blaspheming the name is a particularly egregious sin.

3. Christ’s presence and activity

Invoking the risen Lord (see above; Jas. 2:7; 5:14-15) presupposes his availability and his ability to exercise effectively his will both within the causal continuum in the world and the person’s spiritual state. The risen Lord is present and active in the community of faith, able to affect physical healing for sickness and eschatological resurrection.⁵³

⁴⁹ Interestingly, James uses both Leviticus and the Decalogue in 2:1-13, both of which contain strong denunciations of slandering YHWH. He may be drawing specifically from those texts.

⁵⁰ Blasphemy against the name of God/the Lord also occurs in Isa. 52:5 (τὸ ὄνομά μου βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν); 2 Macc. 8:4 (εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ βλασφημιῶν); cf. Jos. *AJ* 4:202; 6:183; 8:358; Philo *Fug.* 84; *Her.* 170. Regarding Lev. 24:15b-16, Philo interprets the text to mean that verse 15b refers to prohibition against blaspheming other deities (so Israelites would not become accustomed to insulting the term θεός), and verse 16 refers to simply uttering Israel’s God’s name, which incurs the death penalty (Philo, *Mos.* II: 203-208).

⁵¹ E.g. “blessing the name of the Lord” in *1 En.* 9:4; *Pss. Sol.* 6:4; *T. Job* 19:4; *Jos. Asen.* 15:13; cf. *Pss. Sol.* 10:5, 7; *Jas.* 2:7; 3:9; 5:14. For invoking “the name of the Lord,” see above.

⁵² See above for why the “noble name” is the Lord Jesus. It is possible that the blasphemy against “the noble name” alludes to the Decalogue (Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11), since James mentions the commandments against adultery and murder (2:11). If so, blaspheming the name of the community’s Lord, i.e. Jesus, is on par with – indeed is – blaspheming YHWH. Hurtado comments that James’s remarks in 2:7 concern the “sacred significance” of the Lord Jesus’s name (cf. Acts 1-11). Hurtado, “Christology,” 173.

⁵³ Karris argues that “James 5:14 is anti-physician,” because rather than deriving life, wellbeing, and “eschatological gladness” from the physician or *paterfamilias*, who were able to provide treatment to attempt to restore the person to health, the community derives those things “from the power of prayer and

James's language shows the continuity between the Lord's current healing activity within the community with the healing accounts in the Gospels. The Gospels frequently use ἐγείρειν when Jesus heals people.⁵⁴ But the polyvalence of the term allows ἐγείρειν to simultaneously recall resurrection – a central eschatological motif among the earliest Christians.⁵⁵ Confirming the polyvalent reading are the number of eschatological restoration overtones in James 5. The letter begins with the understanding that his audience in some sense restored Israel.⁵⁶ Elijah's presence in 5:17-18 strengthens the eschatological context of James 5:13-18, since he was a regular eschatological figure in early Jewish literature.⁵⁷ Importantly, early Jewish literature developed the Elijah tradition in a way that connected the historical and eschatological inseparably.⁵⁸ So when James, who makes generous use of terms and eschatological themes from the Twelve Prophets who initiated the eschatological Elijah tradition (Mal. 4:5), invokes the historical Elijah as a model for Christian prayer, he also brings with it the eschatological restoration dimension. Also, olive oil (Jas. 5:14) had eschatological connotations in

from the name of the Lord Jesus.” Robert J. Karris, “Some New Angles on James 5:13-20” *Review and Expositor*, 97 (2000): 215. Interestingly, Philo derides those of duplicitous faith who turn immediately to physicians and human cures to heal their ills and scorn asking for help from “the only savior, God” until all else has failed (Philo, *Sacr.* 70-71). Karris, “Some New Angles on James 5:13-20,” 209-210. Cf. Jas. 1:5-8.

⁵⁴ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 333. See the healings of “the paralytic (Matt. 9:5-7; Mark 2:9; Luke 5:23-24; John 5:8); the man with the withered hand (Mark 3:3); the synagogue official’s daughter (Mark 5:41; Luke 8:54); the widow of Nain’s son (Luke 7:14); blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:49); and Lazarus (John 11:29).”

Johnson, *Letter of James*, 333. Strange comments that those who reduce the polyvalent terms ἀσθενέω, ιάωμαι, σώζω, and ἐγείρω to their mundane senses “strip the language of its multifaceted and metaphorical power.” James is talking about the whole person in both physical and eschatological frameworks. Strange, *The Moral World of James*, 32-33. For the connection between healing and eschatology in Jesus’s life, see Dale C. Allison, “The Eschatology of Jesus,” in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* (Vol. 1: Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity; ed. John J. Collins; New York: Continuum, 2002), 298-299.

⁵⁵ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 333. See e.g. Acts 3:7-8, 16; 4:10-12; 1 Cor. 15:4, 12-17, 20, 32, 42-43.

⁵⁶ James M. Darlack, “Pray for Reign: The Eschatological Elijah in James 5:17-18” (MA Thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2007), 52-56, 61. In James 1:1 the mere mention of the twelve tribes brings restoration and eschatological symbolism, escalated even more by the presence of the term χριστός. Jackson-McCabe, “The Messiah Jesus in the Mythic World of James,” 714-715.

⁵⁷ Darlack, “Pray for Reign,” 28-51.

⁵⁸ Darlack, “Pray for Reign,” 51.

Jewish literature in the Roman period.⁵⁹ In the here and now, James's community must experience trials (e.g. 1:2) and the poor suffer injustice (e.g. 2:1-3; 5:4, 6), but the resources of God's reign – healing and forgiveness – are readily available to his people.⁶⁰ The Lord Jesus is continuing his eschatological healing ministry in the community of faith.

The Lord who is coming to judge and save in 5:7-11 and thus is in some sense absent in the now is also present with the community of faith, which may indicate that James is continuing the theme of eschatological restoration as envisioned by the Twelve Prophets. The heavy eschatological language of 5:1-11 and allusions to the Twelve (esp. Hos. 6:1-3) have already primed the readers to the eschatological situation. YHWH's divine theophanic presence depicted in Hosea 6:1-3, alluded to in James 5:7 as the Lord Jesus, may again be at play.⁶¹ In Hosea 6:1 and 7:1 YHWH is coming to heal dispersed Israel (cf. Hos. 11:3; 14:5-9). Indeed, Hosea 6 seems specifically important for James 5:1-18 as a whole. Hosea describes how Israel will/should turn to "the Lord our God" who "will heal us" (6:1), the Lord says to Israel, "Begin to reap for yourself when I return the captivity of my people, when I heal Israel" (ἐν τῷ ιάσασθαι με τὸν Ισραὴλ; Hos. 6:11-7:1a NETS). So the Lord is depicted as postured to heal Israel in the eschatological

⁵⁹ E.g. 2 En. 22:8-10; Apoc. Mos. 8:2; L.A.E. 13:2-6; cf. Deut. 11:13-17. Karris, "Some New Angles on James 5:13-20," 213; Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 66. Karris notes, "as a basic component of life, olive oil became a symbol of life, indeed, a symbol for eschatological life." Karris, "Some New Angles on James 5:13-20," 213.

⁶⁰ Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 61-62. James's has an inaugurated eschatology where God's reign has already begun but is not yet fully consummated. Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 61-62. Darlack notes, "for James, the ministry of prayer, confession and healing is evidence of the *reconstitution of the people of God*." Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 63. Emphasis original. Likewise, "the ministry of healing in James also demonstrates the *inbreaking of the kingdom of God* – challenging sin and sickness." Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 65. Emphasis original.

⁶¹ There are some possible instances of allusions via conceptual and lexical parallels. (1) The Lord eschatologically healing Israel (Hos. 6:1; Jas. 5:14-15; cf. Hos. 7:1). Lexical similarities include κύριος and ιάομαι. (2) κύριος coming/presence + προϊμος και ούψιμος (Hos. 6:3; Jas. 5:7).

future. For James the eschaton has begun.⁶² And he describes how his audience has access to healing/salvation because of the presence of the Lord. Hosea uses agricultural imagery, “reap for yourselves” as does James in the very context of describing the Lord’s healing presence (Jas. 5:17-18; cf. 5:7-8).⁶³ If, as it appears, that James 5:1-18 is specifically drawing from the eschatology of Hosea, he interprets the presence of the Lord in the community of faith as the presence of YHWH with restored Israel as envisioned by the Twelve Prophets.

James 4:15 presents some possible evidence that James understands the Lord Jesus as active in and sovereign over contingent events within the historical continuum of cause and effect. In 4:13-14, James decries those who presumptuously seek to travel and plan their future profitable activities. He responds in 4:15 by instructing them to act alternatively, saying:

Instead you should say, “If the Lord wills, then we will live and do this or that.”

ἀντὶ τοῦ λέγειν ύμᾶς, ἐὰν ὁ κύριος θελήσῃ καὶ ζήσομεν καὶ ποιήσομεν τοῦτο ή
έκεινο.

The import for James’s Christology depends on whether he refers to the Lord Jesus or to God as ὁ κύριος. The standard assumption for modern commentators is that the Lord in 4:15 is God.⁶⁴ Hurtado dissents from the majority view by stating that “the Lord”

⁶² Darlack, “Pray for Reign,” 61-62, 65.

⁶³ In Hosea 14:5-9 the prophet combines the Lord’s healing Israel, his presence with them, and agricultural abundance language. In contrast to Assyria (“Assour shall not save (σώσῃ) us”), the Lord says, “I will heal (ἰάσσομαι) their settlements; I will love them openly, [...]. I will be like dew to Israel; he shall blossom like a lily and strike his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall go forth, and he shall be like a fruitful olive tree, and his fragrance like that of Lebanon. They shall return and sit beneath his shelter; they shall live and be intoxicated on grain, and his memory will blossom like the vine, like the wine of Lebanon. As for Ephraim [...] I am like a leafy juniper tree; your fruit has been found from me” (Hos. 14:5-9 NETS).

⁶⁴ E.g. Laws, *Epistle of James*, 192-194; Johnson, *Letter of James*, 296-297; probably Ropes, see Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 279-280; Baker, “Christology,” 53.

probably refers to Jesus.⁶⁵ Though, as noted earlier, Baker disagrees with Hurtado by stating that no other interpreter follows him.⁶⁶ For Baker, it is definitely a reference “to God’s providential hand over events.”⁶⁷ In both cases though, the specific reasons for the decision remain unstated.

The referent of 4:15 is rather difficult to discern, and it is possible that it is best to heed Michaels’s contention that assigning specific referents to the occurrences of κύριος is misguided because James himself is only interested in his relation to the one Lord God (i.e. Lord Jesus and God as one).⁶⁸ Nevertheless, it may be helpful to attempt to discern a referent in 4:15, if only to see if it is possible. First is the evidence from James himself. He explicitly uses the term κύριος to refer to Jesus in 1:1 and 2:1, but he also calls God “the Lord and Father” in 3:9. The Parousia of the Lord in 5:7-8 and the references to the Lord in 5:14-15 probably refer to the Lord Jesus in line with early Christian phraseology and practice. Despite Baker’s assertion, other than 3:9 there is no clear reference to God as κύριος. The other instances of κύριος (1:7; 4:10; 5:4, 10, 11) are ambiguous and arguably fit better with Jesus as the referent than God the Father. So the evidence regarding κύριος in James is indecisive yet slightly favors Jesus as referent. If one takes James within its early Christian setting, one could point to the frequency of phrases like “the will of God” (Mark 3:35; Rom. 1:10; 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:1; Heb. 10:36; cf. John 4:34; 5:30) and “the will of the Father” (Matt. 7:21; 12:50; 18:14; 21:31; cf. Matt. 6:10; 26:42;

⁶⁵ Hurtado, “Christology,” 173.

⁶⁶ Baker, “Christology,” 53.

⁶⁷ Baker, “Christology,” 53.

⁶⁸ Michaels, “Catholic Christologies,” 273. It is also possible that the ambiguous references to an unqualified “Lord” could have different referents depending on the reader. So a non-Christian Jewish reader might read them as God, but a Christian as the risen Lord Jesus.

Luke 22:42).⁶⁹ More important is Acts 18:21, in which Paul qualifies his future travel plans to return to Ephesus with the condition that God wills it.⁷⁰ So if James means “God” by the term “Lord,” his language fits well with early Christian concern for the will of God. But early Christians also spoke about the Lord Jesus “as active in and sovereign over the seemingly contingent course of historical events.”⁷¹ Paul conditions his travel plans upon the will and permission of the Lord Jesus with the exact phraseology of James 4:15 (1 Cor. 4:19; 16:7).⁷² So James’s language is closer to how early Christians spoke about the risen Lord’s sovereignty over events. The two considerations – (1) James’s use of κύριος and (2) early Christian phrases about “the will of the Lord” – favor a Christological reading of 4:15 over a theological one. As a result, not only is the Lord Jesus present and active in the healing of his people, he governs events within the historical continuum.

4. *Christ’s absence*

The fact that the Lord is coming in James 5:7-9 implies that in some sense he is not yet present. The Lord still needs to meet out justice on the wicked who oppress the righteous (Jas. 5:1-6). In Pauline usage the term παρουσία implies that the person who is “coming,”

⁶⁹ Johnson, *Letter of James*, 297. The heavy presence of “will of the Father” language in Matthew is also important, because James is familiar with it or a similar Jesus tradition.

⁷⁰ Acts does not use ἐὰν + subject + θέλω, but the effect of the conditional participial phrase τοῦ θεοῦ θέλοντος is basically the same. Cf. Rom. 1:10; 15:32; 1 Pet. 3:17. Johnson, *Letter of James*, 297.

⁷¹ Tilling, *PDC*, 141.

⁷² In 1 Cor. 4:19 Paul uses the exact phrase that James does in 4:15: ἐὰν ὁ κύριος θελήσῃ. 1 Cor. 16:7 has the same form, but replaces θέλω with ἐπιτρέπω: ἐὰν ὁ κύριος ἐπιτεέψῃ. Paul refers to the risen Lord rather than God in these instances. See Tilling, *PDC*, 141-142; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 139; cf. 583. Cf. Phil. 2:19, 24 where Paul hopes “in the Lord Jesus” to send Timothy quickly to the Philippians, and is persuaded “in the Lord” that he will indeed come quickly. Paul here is concerned to conform his plans to the will of the Lord Jesus, to whom he and Timothy are slaves (Phil. 1:1). See Ben Witherington III, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 172; G. Walter Hansen, *The Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 193, 199; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 410-411. Cf. Acts 21:14 (likely a reference to the risen Lord because the previous verse contains the phrase “the Lord Jesus”).

whether Paul or his coworkers, is presently absent.⁷³ So in James 5:1-11, the fact that the workers must cry out to their Lord in order to bring justice for the unjustly treated assumes that he is in some sense absent. In 5:9, the various indications that “the judge” is set to judge or potentially judge certain people also implies that the judge is in some sense absent. James’s recourse to the risen Lord as judge who will come is reminiscent of the prophetic tradition in the OT and apocalyptic literature in early Judaism (see above). His language about the future presence is directly analogous to the type of language Jews used in their longing for the presence of their covenant Lord throughout the OT and early Jewish literature (e.g. Pss. 16:11; 21:6; 27:6; 27:4; 42:2; 51:11; 63:1-8; 84:10; 95:2; 100:2; 105:4; Wis. Sol. 3:14; 13:3; 1QH^a 15:28-31; 28:5-9).⁷⁴ Indeed, this is not a tertiary matter of theological nuance; rather, it expresses existential yearning for the community’s absent Lord in the midst of experiencing injustice.⁷⁵

5. Communication between believers and the Lord Jesus

There are no explicit communicative acts between the Lord Jesus and believers in James like there are with God (e.g. 1:5). But if, as I have argued, κύριος σαβαὼθ (probably) refers to Jesus, then it would constitute communication between people and the risen Lord. James would at least be using prophetic discourse in a way that represents unjustly treated workers crying out to Lord Jesus for justice cast in terms that OT figures used for crying out to their covenant deity for justice (e.g. Isa. 5:7).⁷⁶ Also, in 2:7 and 5:14, there

⁷³ Tilling, *PDC*, 155-156. See Paul’s usage of παρουσία in 1 Cor. 16:7; 2 Cor. 7:6-7; 10:10; Phil. 1:26; 2:12.

⁷⁴ Tilling, *Christology*, 157.

⁷⁵ As Tilling notes for Paul’s παρουσία language, “these expressions of the presence and absence of Christ were very real existential longings and experiences, not of secondary importance which really spoke about something else.” Tilling, *Christology*, 158.

⁷⁶ James may allude to Isaiah 5 in James 5:1-11. Isaiah speaks of YHWH bringing agricultural ruin and lack of rain to his people (Isa. 5:6) because he saw injustice and heard cries for justice (Isa. 5:6-7, 8-10, 13,

is evidence for Christians invoking the name of the Lord in communal settings. Such practices would constitute a type of communication, since it assumes the deity is able to hear and respond to the petitioners, if willing.

6. The nature and character of Christ's lordship

In James 1:1 and 2:1 there are the only two occurrences of the three-part onomastic construction κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός. The middle term Ἰησοῦς is the personal name of the figure and the first term κύριος is a title, but the function of χριστός is more difficult to determine. Scholars usually refer to it as a name or a title ("Messiah"), with the implication being that the former carries little to no meaning and the latter significant meaning. For example, Chester asserts that James uses χριστός "really as a part of a proper name."⁷⁷ Presumably this means that the term is not important for James's Christology, since Chester makes no further comment on it. Allison notes that James may use χριστός as "a name with titular significance" like Matthew, John, and Paul.⁷⁸ But contrary to the usual name-title binary to which NT scholars often limit themselves when discussing the significance of χριστός, ancient Greek, Roman, and Jewish onomastic conventions worked in different, more diverse, categories.⁷⁹ So for an early Jewish

23). Importantly, YHWH is called κύριος σαβαὼθ in Isa. 5:7, 9, 16, 24). The exact phrase εἰς τὰ ὄτα κυρίου σαβαὼθ from James 5:4 occurs in Isaiah 5:9 ("For these things were heard into the ears of the Lord Sabaoth"). The translation κύριος σαβαὼθ for ηαων τοῦ θεοῦ is characteristic of the Old Greek of Isaiah (53x; 11x outside Isaiah in the wider Greek OT; Paul's single mention of κύριος σαβαὼθ is in a quotation of Isaiah, Rom. 9:29 of Isa. 1:9). The more widespread translation is κύριος παντοκράτωρ (126x). If James using κύριος σαβαὼθ makes one at least think that Isaiah might be in play, the exact phrase "into the ears of the Lord Sabaoth" (cf. Odes 10:9) and the conceptual/thematic similarities between James 5:1-11 and Isaiah 5 seem too coincidental not to consider it an allusion to Isaiah 5. Cf. 4Q381 24.8-9.

⁷⁷ Chester, "James," 43. Others also espouse this view. So Laws comments that χριστός "seems to have lost the titular sense; it goes with Jesus as effectively part of the proper name of the Lord." Laws, *Epistle of James*, 47. Bold is original.

⁷⁸ Allison, *James*, 126.

⁷⁹ Matthew V. Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 64-80. E.g. Roman male citizens used the *tria nomina*: praenomen, nomen, and cognomen (e.g. Gaius Julius Caesar).

Christian like Paul, “honorific” is the appropriate category for his use of χριστός.⁸⁰ In κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός, κύριος is the title, Ἰησοῦς is the personal name, and χριστός is the honorific.⁸¹ There are useful comparisons in the ancient world, especially with Hellenistic rulers:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Honorific</u>
κύριος	Ἰησοῦς	Χριστός
βασιλεὺς	Πτολεμαῖος	Σωτήρ
βασιλεὺς	Ἀντίοχος	Ἐπιφανῆς
Ἄντακράτωρ	Καῖσαρ	Σέβαστος
Imperator	Caesar	Augustus ⁸²

The same construction “Lord Jesus Christ” is in Acts and occurs throughout Paul’s letters.⁸³ So when James uses χριστός in James 1:1 and 2:1 both in the κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός construction, the most appropriate onomastic category is probably also “honorific.”⁸⁴ James does not expand on what he means by the specific designation χριστός. Its close proximity to the letter’s audience, “the twelve tribes in the Diaspora,” χριστός would have connotations about the restoration of Israel.⁸⁵ The category of “messiah” was not totally fixed nor totally open in the first century, but there was a sort

⁸⁰ Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 87-97.

⁸¹ Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 96.

⁸² Modified from Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 96.

⁸³ Acts 11:17; 28:31; Rom. 1:7; 13:14; 1 Cor. 1:3; 6:11; 8:6; 2 Cor. 1:2; 13:13; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; 6:23; Phil. 1:2; 2:11; 3:20; 4:23; 2 Thess. 1:2, 12; Phlm 3, 25.

⁸⁴ If one dates the letter of James to the second century, one might argue that the term had begun to take the role as another personal name rather than an honorific. In retort, (1) the category “honorific” did not disappear and thus people would have still been able to recognize it, (2) the letter of James takes place in the symbolic world of the Torah/Tanakh, so employing χριστός, especially while mentioning “the twelve tribes of the Diaspora” immediately after, would have brought messianic connotations with it. Jackson-McCabe states that one must avoid comparisons with Paul and Johannine literature regarding James’s Jesus as χριστός, but he has in mind soteriological rather than onomastic categories. Jackson-McCabe, “The Messiah Jesus in the Mythic World of James,” 712.

⁸⁵ Jackson-McCabe, “The Messiah Jesus in the Mythic World of James,” 724.

of family resemblance in early Jewish messianic texts.⁸⁶ Jackson-McCabe argues that, in contrast to the Pauline and Johannine Christ, “James’s Christ is more like the “messiahs” found in the Jewish literature of the period,” one who violently destroys the wicked and restores the twelve tribe kingdom of Israel.⁸⁷ Of course James will use messiah language in ways consonant with broader Jewish usage in Roman-era Judaism and his literary tradition, but to play James off against Paul and John in this regard is going too far, since Paul’s messiah language is also in line with other early Jewish messiah language.⁸⁸ One cannot say too much about James’s use of *χριστός*, but Jackson-McCabe’s characterization of James’s Jesus as a messiah who restores Israel’s twelve tribes and judges the wicked are two solid bases. Taking into account the analysis of James’s Christology thus far, one could further say that James envisions Jesus a divine messiah, which is not without some parallel in Jewish literature (e.g. *1 En.* 37-71; cf. *4 Ezra* 13; *Sib. Or.* 5:414-33; *2 Bar.* 29:1-30:5; 39:7; *Apoc. Abr.* 31:1).⁸⁹ But unlike the so-called

⁸⁶ Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 41. Novenson cogently explains, “the meaningfulness of ancient messiah language derives neither from the self-expression of a reified messianic idea nor from the mass psychological phenomenon of a shared hope for redemption. Popular hope may have been more or less current at different times and places in early Judaism, but the meaningfulness of the language is independent of the fervency of the popular hope. People could know what the words meant whether or not they shared the sentiment expressed. In short, messiah language could be used meaningfully in antiquity because it was deployed in the context of a linguistic community whose members shared a stock of common linguistic resources.” Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 47.

⁸⁷ Jackson-McCabe, “The Messiah Jesus in the Mythic World of James,” 706, see also 715-724.

⁸⁸ Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 98-173. Novenson notes that the phenomenon of early Jewish messiah language is united at the syntactical and wider literary levels (Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 53). So they (1a) use “messiah” as a predicate noun following a copulative verb” (e.g. 11QMelch 2.18; Mark 8:29; *4 Ezra* 12:31-32; *y. Ta'an.* 4:8/27; cf. 1 Sam. 24:7-11), (1b) use “messiah” in temporal clauses, often with a verb of “coming” or “appearing” (e.g. CD 12.23-13.1; 14:19; 19:10-11; 4Q252 5.3-4; *2 Bar.* 30:1; 72:2; Matt. 1:17; John 4:25; cf. Dan. 9:25), (2) use scriptural resources, the most popular of which were Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17; *2 Sam.* 7:12-13; Isa. 11:1-2; Amos 9:11; Dan. 7:13-14. Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs*, 53-61.

⁸⁹ Fletcher-Louis, *Christological Origins*, 171-249. For example, like the divine theophany language Mark and Matthew use regarding Jesus coming as the Son of Man (Mark 8:38; 13:26; Matt. 25:30-31; cf. Dan. 7:13; Zech. 14:5; 1 Thess. 4:15-5:11), so too does the *Similitudes of Enoch* and *4 Ezra* of their Son of Man figures (*1 En.* 52:6; 53:7; 61:5; *4 Ezra* 13:3-4). Fletcher-Louis, *Christological Origins*, 186-188. Also, early Christians saw Jesus as both messiah and fully divine. For Paul’s divine Christology, see esp. Tilling, *PDC*.

divine messiahs that will come in the future, Christians have a lived experience of the Lord Jesus Messiah in the present (e.g. Jas. 1:1; 2:1; 5:14-15).⁹⁰

Besides the contested meaning of the genitives in James 2:1, there is the seemingly unusual placement of *τῆς δόξης* at the end of the sentence in James 2:1.⁹¹ In relation to Christology, the question about *τῆς δόξης* is anywhere from largely irrelevant to exceedingly potent. There are a number of proposals: *τῆς δόξης* acts as an attributive modifying “our Lord Jesus Christ” (“our glorious Lord Jesus Christ”),⁹² it is in apposition (“the glory/the glorious one”),⁹³ it is a rhetorical marker identifying the topic that is to follow (“concerning honor”),⁹⁴ or any number of other functions.⁹⁵ If it is attributive or in apposition, it would be similar to how Paul calls Jesus the “Lord of glory” (1 Cor. 2:8; cf. 1 En. 40:3).⁹⁶ The present work is not about to decide such a disputed text except to say that if the term *δόξα* modifies *κύριος Ἰησοῦς χριστός*, it is consistent with a usual way Jews characterized their covenant Lord and early Christians their Lord Jesus.

⁹⁰ Tilling makes the same point concerning Paul in relation to the Enochic Son of Man. See Tilling, *PDC*, 229. It is noted that Christians both experience the Lord in the present and a future presence (Jas. 5:7-11).

⁹¹ Some MSS and versions front-end *τῆς δοξῆς* (436. 1448. 1611 sy sa^{mss} bo) and some omit it (33. 2344), but the MSS evidence strongly favors it at the end of the sentence.

⁹² Chester, “The Theology of James,” 44; Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 187; Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 402n71.

⁹³ Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Lord of Glory: A Study of the Designations of Our Lord in the New Testament with Especial Reference to His Deity* (Orig. 1907; Reprint; Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2003), 264; Laws, *James*, 94-97. Laws states that, “when James calls Jesus *the glory*, he may be seen to reflect this understanding of Jesus as ‘theophany’; a manifestation of the presence of God.” Laws, *Epistle of James*, 97.

⁹⁴ Bruce A. Lowe, “James 2:1 in the Πιστὸς Χριστοῦ Debate: Irrelevant or Indispensable?,” in *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies* (eds. Michael F. Bird and Preston M. Sprinkle; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), 239-257.

⁹⁵ Lowe lists ten possibilities (adding his own would make 11). See, Lowe, “James 2:1,” 245-246. Ropes lists six alternatives to his own (attributive genitive, i.e. “our glorious Lord Jesus Christ) that he rejects. See Ropes, *Epistle of St. James*, 187-188. Allison rejects the NA28 reading (and all attested readings) and offers a conjectural emendation for *τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης*. He thinks it reads: *τοῦ κυρίου τῆς δόξης*. Allison, *Epistle of James*, 382-384.

⁹⁶ Tilling notes how Paul’s Christ language, including “the Lord of glory” in 1 Cor. 2:8 is analogous to language the *Similitudes of Enoch* uses for the Lord of the Spirits (see esp. 1 En. 40:3). So it would be for James, if *τῆς δόξης* modifies Lord Jesus Christ. Tilling, *PDC*, 225-230.

In 2:7 James mentions “the noble name” (*τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα*). An analogous use can be found in the Old Greek Psalm 134 where the psalmist calls “the name” of the Lord “noble.” The psalms reads, “Alleluya, praise the name of the Lord, praise, slaves, the Lord, [...]. Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing to his name, for [it is] καλόν” (1, 3). So James characterizes the name of the Lord as “noble.”

If the above analysis is correct, James refers to the Lord Jesus in 5:11.⁹⁷ He describes him as *πολύσπλαγχνός καὶ οἰκτίρμων* (“very compassionate and merciful”), which reflects stock phraseology to describe the character of Israel’s covenant Lord. The paradigmatic text is Exodus 34:6-7 in which YHWH descends to Mount Sinai in divine theophany for a covenant ceremony, and Moses responds:

The Lord, the Lord God is compassionate and merciful (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων*), patient (*μακρόθυμος*) and very merciful (*πολυέος*) and truthful and preserving righteousness and doing mercy for thousands, taking away acts of lawlessness and of injustice and sins, and he will not acquit the guilty person, bringing lawless acts of fathers upon children and upon children of children, upon the third and fourth generation (NETS).

Moses’s declaration about YHWH became a standard way for Jews to describe the character of their covenant God.⁹⁸ Such a characterization is consistent with describing the Lord Jesus as the one whose theophanic presence is likened to the “early and late rain” à la Hosea 6:1-3 (cf. Deut. 11:13-14). James uses a variation of the stock phrase to

⁹⁷ See “James 5:1-11” section above for the interpretation that the *κύριος* in 5:11 is the Lord Jesus.

⁹⁸ Deut. 4:31 (*οἰκτίρμων*); Num. 14:18 (*μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος*); 2 Chron. 30:9 (*ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων*); Neh. 9:17 (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέος*), 31 (*ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων*); Ps. 85:15 OG (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος*); Ps. 102:8 OG (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος*); Ps. 110:4 OG (*ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων*); Ps. 111:4 OG (*ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων καὶ δίκαιος*); Ps. 144:8 OG (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος*); Sir. 2:11 (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων*); Joel 2:13 (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος*); Jon. 4:2 (*οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος*); T. Jud. 19:3; Pr. Man. 1:7; cf. Pss. 24:6 OG; 50:3 OG; 68:17 OG; 77:38 OG; 4 Ezra 7:162-66 [132-136]; Jos. Asen. 11:10; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:3; Heb. 10:28.

remind his community that their Lord (cf. “our Lord Jesus Christ” in Jas. 2:1) is compassionate and merciful to his people, and their endurance is not in vain.

Does James’s Christ-relation constitute a divine Christology?

James 5:1-11 provided our entrance into understanding how James relates to and conceives of the community’s Lord Jesus Messiah. He is coming in divine eschatological theophany to bring justice to the unjust and salvation to his people. Taking the invitation from 5:1-11 to examine the rest of James in relational terms analogous to YHWH in the OT and how Jews related to their deity, we organized his Christology as such:

(1) *Various expressions of Christ-devotion.* James identifies himself as a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1). His life is oriented around his total devotion and allegiance to his Lord, the Lord of the Christian community (“our Lord;” 2:1) in whom Christians must have integrous faith (2:1; cf. 2:14-26). The Christian community invokes the name of their Lord over its members (2:7; 5:14). In at least some cases, invoking the Lord takes place in the context of communal polyvalent healing practices for the ill (5:14).

(2) *What is contrasted with Christ-devotion.* James contrasts partiality against the socially and economically poor within the community with faith in their Lord Jesus Christ (2:1-4). Such anti-poor partiality shames God’s people who are indeed rich in faith, which amounts to violating “the royal law” rather than fulfilling it (2:8-9). The law is a whole (2:10; ὅλος) and Christians should fulfill it (2:8; τελέω), since the goal of Christian living is to be τέλειοι and ὀλόκληροι (1:4). So those who act with partiality shows them to be ones who dispute with God and to be duplicitous in their allegiance (1:6-8; δίψυχος). James also mentions that some “blaspheme the noble name,” the very name invoked upon the Christians (2:7).

(3) *The risen Lord’s presence and activity.* Being a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, having faith in him, and invoking his name all presuppose his imminence and presence as Lord of the community. The risen Lord is sovereign over events within the historical continuum (4:15). James instructs elders of the assembly to invoke the Lord’s name because he is able to affect healing from physical illness and sin (5:14-16).

(4) *The risen Lord’s absence.* James understands that the risen Lord is in some sense absent (5:7-9) by using the term παρουσία. His imminent coming in judgment and salvation is the grounds for ethical action in the present, but his παρουσία is not yet fully imminent.

(5) *Communication between believers and the Lord Jesus.* James may instruct his audience to pray to the risen Lord in the context of communal healing (5:15). Also, he may depict the oppressed calling out to the Lord Jesus for justice (5:4).

(6) *The nature and character of Christ's Lordship.* James understands Jesus as both the Lord of the community (depicted as a restored Israel), and as Messiah (1:1; 2:1). He characterizes the Lord Jesus as "very compassionate and merciful" (5:11), "noble" (2:7), and perhaps "glorious" (2:1).

What emerges is a relation between James and the community of faith with the risen Lord that resembles that all-consuming love for YHWH prescribed in the OT and experience of the Lord's presence yet awareness of his absence. James casts his ethical vision for the community of faith in light of their relation to the risen Jesus (esp. 2:1-13; 5:1-11). When one casts the christological problem of whether James has a divine Christology or not in relational terms analogous to how Israel and individual Jewish people related to their covenant deity, the little evidence that James provides strongly supports the proposition that James has a divine Christology. It was also noted that the letter of James is eschatological paraenesis, which accounts for why the text of James is relatively christologically porous. Yet even so, the evidence indicates that James himself would recognize the Christ-relation pattern, since it is central to his ethics (2:1-13; 5:1-11), integrated into the practices of the community (2:7; 5:14-16), and it is integral to his own and the community's self-definition (1:1; 2:1). Additionally, he regularly brings the categories together. In 2:1-9, for example, James mentions faith in Christ (expression of Christ-devotion), the community's Lord, and contrasts partiality with that faith in him (what is contrasted with Christ-devotion). Similarly in 2:7, he contrasts blasphemy against the name of Jesus with invoking that very name, which is "noble." One can see the relational categories cluster around the relatively few references to the Lord Jesus. As

a result, any claims that James has a non-divine, or non-existent Christology fail to account for the relation between James and his community with the risen Lord.

Conclusion

The main question of this study is: does the letter of James have a divine Christology? We began by surveying recent scholarship on James's Christology. There is a sharp divide in the conclusions scholars come to. On the one hand, scholars like Andrew Chester and Dale Allison argue that one simply cannot know much about James's Christology since he says so little about Jesus. They point to the fact that James only mentions Jesus sparingly, and Allison even argues that James only mentions Jesus in 1:1. If James only mentions Jesus in 1:1, or 1:1 and 2:1, it is a model of scholarly caution to reserve judgment about whether James has a divine Christology, because one cannot say much about his Christology at all. But there are a number of scholars who disagree with their assessment of the evidence. Michaels, Baker, Sloan, Hurtado, and Bauckham all argue in various ways that James treats Jesus in ways that Jews treated their God, YHWH. In order to substantiate their claims, it is necessary to understand how Jewish monotheists in the Second Temple period related to their covenant God (Chapter 1).

Next we surveyed recent scholarship on Jewish monotheism to establish how early Jews expressed their faith in God. Peter Hayman and Paula Fredriksen prefer not to use the term *monotheism* at all, because Jews also believed in other "divine" beings. Opposite them are Hurtado, Bauckham, McGrath, and Tilling. Despite their disagreements about specifics, they consider the term *monotheism* appropriate to describe how Jews related to their God. We adopted Tilling's understanding of how Jews construed God's uniqueness relationally as an exclusive all-consuming love and devotion to him as their covenant God over against idolatry (Chapter 2).

Then we briefly examined the shape and content of how James speaks about and relates to the figure he calls “God” and “Father.” A number of relational categories present themselves:

- (1) Various expression of God-devotion (1:1, 5, 12, 27; 2:5, 14-26; 3:9, 17-18; 4:7-8)
- (2) What James contrasts with God-devotion (1:6-7, 22-27; 2:14-26; 3:9; 4:1-6)
- (3) God’s presence and activity (1:5, 12, 17-18; 4:7-8)
- (4) Communication between God and believers (1:5-7)
- (5) The nature and character of God’s lordship (1:5, 13, 17, 18, 27)
- (6) What is contrasted with the nature and character of God’s lordship (1:13-15, 20)

What emerges is in line with how Jews expressed their God’s uniqueness through relationship. Strengthening the notion that James would recognize the relational pattern is the fact that he regularly brings them together (e.g. 1:5-7). As such, this “God-relation” pattern that expresses God’s uniqueness calibrates how James’s divine Christology might look if indeed he considers Jesus divine (Chapter 3).

After that, the thesis examined James 5:1-11. The main argument is that James, by alluding to Hosea 6:1-3 in James 5:7-8, uses language to talk about the Lord Jesus that Hosea and the Twelve prophets use to talk about YHWH. It is also contended that, contrary to the common scholarly assumption, it is best to consider that κύριος consistently refers to Jesus in 5:1-11. The two main arguments to support such a reading is the coherence of 5:1-11 and that η παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου refers to the Lord Jesus (in line with the universal early Christian understanding of the Parousia). As a result, James and Christians relate to the risen Lord Jesus in the way Israelites and Jews related to their covenant God, YHWH. Consequently, we take James 5:1-11 as an invitation to examine James’s Christology to see if it is analogous to how Jews related to their God (Chapter 4).

The final chapter analyzed how James speaks about and relates to the figure he calls “Lord Jesus Christ.” Six relational categories present themselves:

- (1) Various expressions of Christ-devotion (1:1; 2:1, 7; 5:14)
- (2) What James contrasts with Christ-devotion (2:1-13, 7)
- (3) Christ’s presence and activity (2:7; 4:15; 5:14-15)
- (4) Christ’s absence (5:7-9)
- (5) Communication between believers and the Lord Jesus (2:7; 5:4, 14-15)
- (6) The nature and character of Christ’s lordship (1:1; 2:1, 7; 5:11)

Not only does James relate to Christ in many of the same ways he relates to God, the general shape of the “Christ-relation” pattern and the specific texts all indicate that the way James and his community relate to their Lord (Jesus) is in precisely analogous ways that Israelites and Jews expressed the uniqueness of their covenant Lord, YHWH.

Therefore, it is concluded that James does have a divine Christology. One can express the main thesis in this way: James has a fully divine Christology, because the content and shape of James’s Christology, construed as a relation between the believer and the risen Lord, is analogous to how Jewish monotheists related to their covenant deity, YHWH.

Appendix A – Injustice as Impetus for Divine Theophany in 1 Enoch 91-107 and

James

Early Jewish literature evidences the theme of YHWH coming in divine theophany to judge those who unjustly treat his people. To take one example of probable pre-Christian Jewish literature, in 1 Enoch 91-107 there are similar prophetic denunciations directed toward rich people who abuse and oppress, yet also exhortation to the faithful to practice righteousness and live with integrity and devotion to God. Four themes are pertinent to James 5:1-11: (1) The crimes and unjust actions by which the rich oppress, (2) the deity's relation to the righteous, (3) the impending eschatological judgment, (4) exhortations to the righteous. First, the objects of the prophetic oracles of judgment are those characterized as oppressors (1 En. 94:6, 9; 95:6; 96:2, 7; 97:6; 99:15; 100:7), deceivers and liars (1 En. 94:6; 95:6; 96:7; 97:10; 98:15; 99:1, 12; 104:9), ones who use their position of power to coerce or to use unjust means to accomplish their ends, especially to acquire wealth (1 En. 96:4; 95:7; 96:5-8; 97:8-10; 98:8; 99:15; 102:9), sinners, evil, and wicked (1 En. 94:11; 95:2; 96:1, 2; 97:1, 7; 98:4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15; 99:1, 6-15; 100:4, 7-9; 101:9; 102:9; 103:5; 104:7-9), and ones whose actions and posture are against the deity (94:8; 96:7; 101:9; 102:3; 104:9). Second, the deity ("the Most High," "your Creator," "the Great Holy One," "the Holy Great One," "the Great Glory," "the Great one," "the Lord," "the Lord of heaven," "God," "heaven") is opposed to the oppressors, especially as their covenant judge who will bring upon them eschatological judgment and destruction (1 En. 91:7; 94:11; 95:3; 97:2, 6; 98:4; 100:4).¹ On the contrary, the deity is on the side of the oppressed righteous. Third, the eschatological judgment on the horizon

¹ Quotations from Charlesworth's *OTP* vol. 1. James H. Charlesworth, ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (Vol. 1; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983).

is variously referred to as “the day of darkness and the day of great judgment” (1 En. 94:9) and similar phrases that begin with “the day of” (1 En. 96:2, 8; 97:1, 3; 98:8, 10; 99:6, 15; 100:4; 104:5) or is signaled with the phrase “in those days” (1 En. 99:3; 100:1, 4; 102:1; 105:1). Fourth, the author exhorts his audience to practice righteousness and live with integrity and single-minded devotion to the covenant deity in the midst of oppression (1 En. 91:4, 19; 94:1, 3-5; 96:1; 104:2, 4, 6; cf. 108:2), for the deity is bringing a new creation (1 En. 91:16; 106:13), the prayers of the righteous will reach the Lord (1 En. 97:5), and the deity will protect them (1 En. 100:5) and reward them (1 En. 103:3-4; 104:1-5, 12; cf. 108:12-15).

All four analytical categories we used for 1 Enoch fit well with James 5:1-11. (1) The rich (οἱ πλούσιοι) defrauded their laborers from their wages (Jas. 5:4; 5:1-6 generally; cf. Deut. 24:14-15). (2) The deity (“the Lord of Hosts” (5:4), “the Lord” (5:7, 8, 10, 11), “the judge” (5:9)) has heard the cries of the unjustly treated laborers (Jas. 5:4), and his presence and character is the motivation for the community’s ethics (Jas. 5:7-11). (3) The Lord is coming to judge the unjust (Jas. 5:1 “coming miseries,” 5:7, 8 “coming of the Lord,” 5:9 “the judge stands at the door”). (4) James exhorts the community to live with patience and endurance in the midst of trial on the basis of the coming eschatological presence and the character of their covenant deity (Jas. 5:7-11). The comparison between James 5:1-11 (and James generally) and 1 Enoch 91-107 does not indicate literary dependence or allusion; rather, it reinforces that James, especially in 5:1-11, is strongly eschatological in content. He uses eschatological themes similarly to how other Jewish writers used them. YHWH will come to judge and restore, so God’s people

must devote themselves to God with integrity and righteous living, not in word only.

James and 1 Enoch both draw from the biblical prophetic tradition.

Appendix B – The Twelve, Eschatology, and James 5:1-11

Taking my queue from Jobes, this appendix briefly surveys the relevant eschatological visions of those three books (besides Hosea) within the Twelve that are most influential on James (Malachi, Zechariah, Amos), plus Joel.¹

Amos brings YHWH’s charges against Israel, among which he lists unjust acts against the righteous poor and needy (Amos 2:6-7a, 8; 4:1; 5:10; 8:4-6) and empty sacrifices (4:4-5). So YHWH recounts the covenant curses he brought/is bringing upon Israel (4:6-13), which included withholding rain and visiting agricultural ruin on those who oppress the poor (4:7-9; 5:10-11; 8:11). Those who live in luxurious self-indulgence and violence (6:1-7), YHWH stands against in judgment (6:8). Amos depicts their future judgment as “the day of the Lord” (5:18, 20; OG ἡμέρα κυρίου) and “that day”/“the days” (8:9,11). Amos uses “day of the Lord” in the context of YHWH’s judgment and justice (Amos 5:7-9) in contrast to Israel’s injustice against the poor and needy (5:11-12). As a result, YHWH’s theophanic presence is coming. YHWH says, “I will pass through the midst of you” (Amos 5:17 NETS). Thus his judgment and justice come as “the day of the Lord” (Amos 5:18, 20, 24). Yet YHWH calls Israel to repentance and restoration (5:4-7, 14-15). He himself will restore David’s tent “in that day” (9:11-12), envisioned in terms of agricultural abundance (9:13-15).

Joel pronounces judgment against the inhabitants of “the land” by declaring agricultural ruin (1:4-12) and calls for the priests to lament (1:13-14), “because the day of

¹ The reason the appendix includes Joel is because he includes the distinctive phrase from James 5:7, προίμον καὶ ὄψιμον, in his eschatological vision. The analysis of Hosea, arguably the most influential book on James from the Twelve Prophets, is in the main body of the paper.

the Lord is near, and it will come like misery from misery” (Joel 1:15 NETS).² Joel speaks of the day of the Lord in stock divine theophany imagery (Joel 2:1-3, 11, 28-32).³ Yet Joel says, “return to the Lord, your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, patient and very beneficent...” (Joel 2:13 NETS).⁴ YHWH will restore his people, which Joel depicts through the image of agricultural plenty over against agricultural ruin (Joel 2:19-26) and YHWH’s presence (Joel 2:27-29). YHWH will give them the covenant blessing of “the early and later rain” (ὑετὸν προίμον καὶ ὕψιμον; Joel 2:23 OG). YHWH says to Israel, “and you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and I am the Lord your God, and there is none other but me” (Joel 2:27 NETS). So YHWH’s presence is associated with the covenant blessing of agricultural abundance, and specifically the early and latter rain in Joel (cf. Joel 3:16-18, 21). Joel’s depiction of the eschatological divine theophany entails both blessing and judgment. So, “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32 NETS), but YHWH will also judge “the nations” (Joel 3:1-2). There is blessing for God’s faithful people, but judgment on “the nations” who did violence to them (Joel 3:1ff).

² One can see the language of Greek Joel echoed in James 5:1-11. Greek Joel 1:15b-c reads: ὅτι ἐγγυς ἡμέρα κυρίου καὶ ὡς ταλαιπωρία ἐκ ταλαιπωρίας ἥξει. Given the shared context of eschatological judgment and the lexical prominence of the Twelve in James, the text of James 5:1 (ταῖς ταλαιπωρίαις ὑμῶν ταῖς ἐπερχομέναις) gives further credence to the association of “the day of the Lord” with James 5:1-11.

³ Joel’s vision of the Day of the Lord is depicted in Sinaitic theophany language: “darkness” (Joel 2:2; cf. Exod. 14:20; Deut. 4:11; 5:23), “gloom” (Joel 2:2; cf. Exod. 10:22), “clouds and blackness” (Joel. 2:2; cf. Exod. 20:21; Deut. 4:11; 5:22), and thunder from YHWH (2:11). Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *God at Sinai: Covenant and Theophany in the Bible and Ancient Near East* (SOTBT; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 309.

⁴ Again one sees the verbal resonances between Joel’s eschatology and James 5:1-11 in Joel 2:13 and James 5:11. Joel and James use a variety of stock ways to describe YHWH’s character from Exodus 34:6-7. Greek Joel 2:13 reads: ἐπιστράφητε πρὸς κύριον τὸν θεὸν ὑμῶν, ὅτι ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων ἔστιν, μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος....James 5:11 reads: ὅτι πολύσπλαγχνος ἔστιν ὁ κύριος καὶ οἰκτίρμων. For Joel and James, the character of YHWH – merciful and compassionate – is a motivation for the ethic of God’s people.

Malachi also contains divine theophany coupled with judgment and salvation. The Lord Almighty (κύριος παντοκράτωρ) chastises the “priests, who despise [his] name” because they dishonorably offer unacceptable sacrifices (Mal. 1:6-14), showed partiality (Mal. 2:9), associated with other deities (Mal. 2:11). YHWH is sending his messenger to prepare for his Sinai-like theophany.⁵ Malachi 3:1-5, which has particular resonances in James, especially James 5:1-11, reads:

[...] and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to the shrine (τὸν ναὸν), [...] ²and who will endure the day of his arrival, or who will withstand his appearance? For he is coming like the fire of a smelter and like the lye of cleaners [...] ⁵And I will draw near to you in judgment; I will be a swift witness against the sorceresses and against the adulteresses and against those who defraud the hired worker of his wages and those who oppress the widow and those who buffet the orphans and those who turn aside justice from the guest and those who do not fear me, says the Lord Almighty (Mal. 3:1, 2, 5 NETS; cf. Lev. 19:13-14,15-16, 33-34; Deut. 27:19; Jas. 1:27; 4:4; 5:1-11).

Injustice, especially against the socially vulnerable as exemplified in the Sinaitic covenant stipulations,⁶ is the occasion for YHWH’s theophanic judgment and presence. Significantly, Malachi invokes Elijah as the type of messenger whom YHWH is sending (Mal. 4:4 OG). Elijah is particularly associated with drought and rain in the OT, and James explicitly refers to him in association with drought and rain (Jas. 5:17-18). As soon as Elijah shows up in the OT as YHWH’s prophet, he declares to king Ahab that there will not be rain except by his word (1 Kgs. 17:1). And a few verses later, the wadi dried up, “because there was no rain upon the land” (ὅτι οὐκ ἐγένετο θετὸς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς; 1 Kgs./3Rgs. 17:7 OG). The reason for the drought was covenant infidelity and idolatry (1

⁵ Niehaus, *God at Sinai*, 331.

⁶ That Malachi is specifically referring to violations of Mosaic law is evident not only from the content of his denunciations, allusions to Sinaitic divine theophany, and blessing/curse imagery that reflects knowledge of the Torah, but also from the explicit command for his audience to “remember the law of Moyses” (Mal. 4:6 NETS).

Kgs. 18:18). Elijah calls for unswerving allegiance to YHWH alone rather than duplicitous allegiance to Baal and YHWH (1 Kgs. 18:21).

Zechariah's eschatology is multifaceted and complex, but only part of it is especially relevant to James 5:1-11. In the eschatological future the Lord will judge and save through his presence. The Lord speaks against the priesthood and prophets, because they have not judged justly, acted mercifully and compassionately, and they neglected the widow, orphan, the guest, and the needy (Zech. 7:9-13; cf. Lev. 19:9-10, 15, 33-34; Deut. 27:19; Jas. 1:27; 2:1-13). Eschatological judgment through the cleansing presence of the Lord is coming on the unjust and those who warred against Jerusalem (e.g. Zech. 13:2-8; 14:13). There is also a positive aspect Zechariah emphasizes. YHWH calls his people to restoration, "Return to me, and I will return to you" (Zech. 1:3 NETS), for YHWH is angry with the nations who attacked Jerusalem (Zech. 1:15). So he says, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion" (Zech. 1:16 NETS). He will come in divine theophany (Zech. 2:5, 10; 8:3; 9:14). In eschatological future the Lord will root out all injustice in the land and, "on that day," there will be agricultural abundance (Zech. 3:9-10; 8:12) and YHWH and his people will enjoy a positive covenant relationship (Zech. 8:8). In the context of describing the eschatological future,⁷ YHWH states, "Ask rain from the Lord in the early and latter season" (Zech. 10:1 NETS; OG: Αἰτεῖσθε ὑετὸν παρὰ κυρίου καθ' ὥραν πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον). So like the other prophets in the Twelve, Zechariah envisions the eschatological future as one of judgment and salvation by means of divine theophany, the latter portrayed in terms of agricultural abundance, including mention of πρόιμον καὶ ὄψιμον.

⁷ The most immediate indicator that Greek Zechariah 10 begins within the eschatological setting is Zech. 9:16, which mentions, "And the Lord will save them in that day" (OG: καὶ σώσει αὐτὸν κύριος ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ).

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